

Log Cabin Library (Pocket Edition)

10 Cents

*R. Smith — Everyman's Library*

# GENTLEMAN JOE'S LEADVILLE LEAD

R



BY THE AUTHOR OF ~~THE~~  
GENTLEMAN JOE

No. 101  
Nov. 15, '99

STREET & SMITH, Publishers,

238 William Street  
NEW YORK

RALPH SMITH

19 SHERIDAN ST.

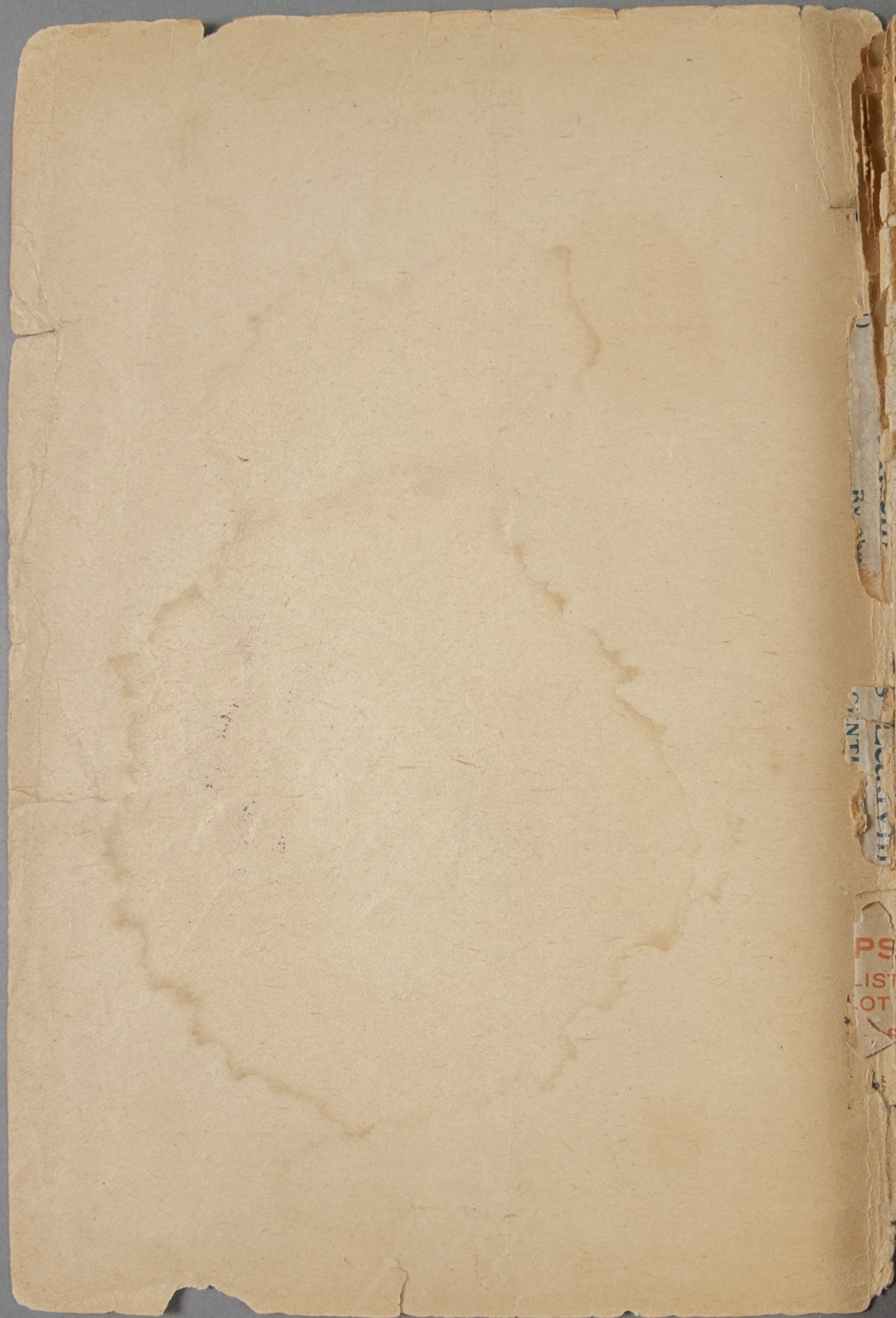
LAWRENCE, MASS.

WANTED  
D PRICE

TH

WANTED  
AND PRICE  
TO  
SMITH







SEND for latest list of boys &c nov-  
els that we sell for 3½c each, post  
paid, or exchange. 10 Samples 35c.

*Ralph Smith,* 3 Brook St., R. 44  
Lawrence, Mass.

Issued Weekly. By subscription \$5 per year. November 15, 1899.  
Entered as second-class matter at N. Y. post-office.

# Gentleman Joe's Leadville Lead;

OR,

## FOXY FAN'S FLUSH.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"GENTLEMAN JOE,"



NEW YORK  
STREET & SMITH, PUBLISHERS  
238 WILLIAM STREET

~~RALPH SMITH  
19 SHERRIDAN ST.  
LAWRENCE, MASS.~~

128 pages A.R.



SEND for latest list of boys 5c NOV-  
els that we sell for 3½c each, post  
paid, or exchange. 10 Samples 3½c.  
*Ralph Smith, Lawrence, Mass.*  
3 Brook St., R. 44

Entered according to Act of Congress in the year 1896, by  
STREET & SMITH, in the office of the Librarian  
of Congress at Washington, D. C.



~~RALPH SMITH~~  
~~19 SHERIDAN ST.~~  
~~LAWRENCE, MASS.~~

# GENTLEMAN JOE'S LEADVILLE LEAD;

OR,

## FOXY FAN'S FLUSH.

By the Author of "GENTLEMAN JOE."

### CHAPTER I.

#### THE GILT-EDGED SPORT VERSUS FARO SHARP.

"Go easy, boy, or you'll slip your bridle!"

"That's useless advice in my case, Joseph Gentry, under such circumstances as these. I'll follow that man to the ends of the earth if need be, and he'll give up those papers or I'll have his life!"

"Soften down those words, man, unless you want to fetch up at a hanging-bee one of these days. If anything should happen to Hime Henderson, and it wasn't quite clear how he was taken off, those words would be pretty strong against you."

"If anything should happen to Hime Henderson and it wasn't quite clear how he met his death, you may set it down in your own mind, Joseph Gentry, that I was present at his taking off!"

"You talk wild, Kit. If you can't ease up a bit on your speech I'll have to shut it off for you just a little—for your own good, you know!"

As Gentleman Joe spoke these words he actually sprang up and caught the hot-headed young man, who sat at the other side of a small deal table, almost fiercely by the shoulder.

Kit Kimball, or Kid Glove Kit, as he was sometimes called, sprang up also, his naturally pale face flushed, his



blue eyes blazing, his whole form fairly quivering with a passion which seemed to be beyond his control.

The room in which this colloquy took place was a small room, though it was the largest one in a small house well on the outskirts of the then new town of Leadville.

The town was new, but this particular building had marks of age about it, as if it had either been built for some time or constructed of lumber taken from an old building which had been demolished.

The last explanation suggested was the true one.

The hour was late in an April afternoon.

The little patch of sunlight which had photographed the sash of the window upon the floor had now disappeared, making the room seem a little dark in comparison.

At the moment that the sun had disappeared beyond the mountain tops a face had peered in at this window, and it was at just that time that the young man had made that hot-headed remark which Gentleman Joe had tried in vain to check.

The face that thus looked in was thin and hawk-like in expression. Its gaze was bent on the inmates of the room for a moment, but the instant that Gentleman Joe and his companions changed their position the face dropped out of sight and did not appear again.

"Remember, my boy," said Gentleman Joe, with an impressiveness that he did not often display, "that to such a man as Hime Henderson, in such a country as this, something is likely to happen. He is very popular in town, I understand, and has a good many more friends than enemies. You were almost a stranger and so far you have seemed to have a knack for making enemies instead of friends. It is under such conditions as these that circumstantial evidence is made to count against a man in case that a crime is committed. I do not think that a great many innocent men are hung, and I know that there are a good many guilty ones who go through life with whole necks. But if ever a man got into a pickle, he did it by using his tongue too freely when he didn't mean half he said."

"Your caution is good, Mr. Gentry, and I suppose that I am worse than a fool if I don't take it and observe it."



"You might as well take it that way, Kit, and so die with a sound neck."

"But what difference, after all, does it make how a man dies? He has got to die somehow, and why not do it with the feeling inside of him that he has never flinched from saying what was in his heart, and did that thing which he thought was right without fear or favor?"

"That sounds very well in words, youngster, but put it into practice and it wouldn't look well. So keep a bridle on your tongue and go easy. And just another piece of advice, youngster, that I want to leave with you."

"Out with it, then—I'm in the mood to swallow most anything."

"When you show yourself in any of the resorts of a town like this don't wear any gloves."

"What do you mean by that?"

"You know the handle they have put onto your name, I suppose?"

"Kid-Glove Kit—but what of that?"

"Nothing, only the society we mingle in here doesn't have much use for gloves unless they have need of them to keep their hands warm."

"But can't a man wear anything that he pleases?"

"'When you are with the Romans do as the Romans do,' fits the case as well as anything that I can think of," quoted Gentleman Joe.

As Gentry spoke he glanced at his watch and added:

"I have spent more time than I can afford, for you know I have another appointment and some hustling to do if I would get into Denver in time. I'm sorry that I can't help you more, but there are some things that can't be helped, you know, and some things that you have got to wait for."

"I suppose there are some things that one has to wait for," returned Kid-Glove Kit, half musingly.

He shook hands with Gentleman Joe absently, and hardly looked at his friend as the latter went out.

Gentry had a horse at the door, and in a moment he was in the saddle and riding up the well-built street which, even at that hour, showed signs of life and bustle that a new town which is really bound to grow is wont to display.



At the farther end of this street was a newly built building with a tall, funnel-like chimney, the latter supported by iron rods against the sweeping mountain winds, and at this time sending forth a black volume of smoke.

The new smelting works were being put in largely under the direction of Gentleman Joe.

He drew up before the building, and was about to dismount when he was attracted by a chorus of shouts which appeared to come from an open space on the other side of the works.

Gentleman Joe listened for a moment, interested as he always was in the unusual.

Just then there came to his ears an unmistakable cry for help, and to such a cry as that Joseph Gentry was never deaf.

In a moment his steed bore him past the building, over the rough ground beyond, bringing him into full view of the strange scene which was transpiring.

A man astride of a horse was clinging frantically to the neck of his steed, the latter rearing and plunging with a terror that seemed to be in full sympathy with that of his master.

Such was the first object upon which the glance of Gentleman Joe fell.

The same glance took in the immediate cause of the excitement of the man and beast.

The man's ankles were bound to the side of the horse. A rope passing under the animal's body fettered his feet together.

Under the rider's arms another rope had been passed, and the double length of it extended back to the trunk of a small tree twenty yards distant, to which it was attached.

One man stood at the horse's head while two others were at hand on either side, both with whips with which they were cutting the animal's legs at frequent intervals.

Beyond there was a rapidly gathering crowd of spectators who seemed to be running out from the village street and swarming down from the rocks of the slope beyond.



So much the gaze of Gentleman Joe took in at once, every detail, as it were, being photographed upon his brain.

It looked like an attempt, if carried into effect, to tear the rider limb from limb.

Yet it was evident from the actions of the ones engaged in it that it was intended to make the torture a gradual and a deliberate one, probably designed to bring the victim to some sort of terms to which he was most reluctant to yield.

He recognized the man at a glance. As usual, his action was prompt.

He rode straight on over the rough ground, making a bee-line for the man who stood at the head of the horse.

At the same time a knife gleamed in his hand, and as he rode alongside the other steed he bent quickly forward and the steel blade swept in a circle through the air.

Twang!—and the rope which passed around the body of the victim was cut in twain.

The most natural thing to expect was that the men who had been executing this unique attempt upon their victim would have sprung to prevent Gentleman Joe from interfering further.

Instead, the man at the horse's head drew back and stared at Gentry, while the two who had been lashing the horse's legs likewise ceased their efforts and stared—but not at Gentleman Joe.

For at that instant, from the door-way of a shanty close by, a lithe, feminine form sprang, and a low cry of anger broke from that person's lips.

Straight across the intervening space she sped with swift bounds, pausing in front of Gentleman Joe, with cheeks beautifully flushed, eyes flashing, one jeweled hand uplifted, and her finger touching the trigger of a revolver which covered the heart of Gentleman Joe.

"Back, you meddler, or I'll teach you something which you ought to have known before! Mind your own affairs!"

Gentleman Joe's gaze fell upon the beautiful, upturned face.

The hand that held the knife which had liberated the



stranger relaxed, while a low, amazed ejaculation burst from his lips.

"In the name of wonder, what is the meaning of this? Foxy Fan here at Leadville!—and threatening my life!"

Many pairs of eyes were fixed upon the young woman who was playing such an important part.

There were not many who did not recognize Gentleman Joe, and there were several, who, at least, knew something of the reputation if not of the career of this dashing little lady who had played a striking part in more than one mountain drama.

Foxy Fan, the Faro Sharp, she was called, and many were the victims of her nerve and skill at cards.

This was not all.

It was said that she had as much skill with her revolver as she exhibited at her favorite game. Many were the tales current about her coolness and nerve, and not one of these was to her discredit in this respect.

A quick succession of changes passed over her face at this moment.

Her lips parted as if she would fire back a response, then closed again, compressing tightly as if she were using all her will not to utter the remark which rose to her lips.

The flush upon her cheeks was seen to fade, leaving her for the moment deathly pale, then a faint tinge of color returned again.

Her eyes, too, first filled with a light which was almost fierce, momentarily softened in their expression and then grew determined again.

Gentleman Joe, looking at her, was blind to these changes as perhaps he had been blind in former times to words and looks coming from this young woman—for Gentleman Joe and Foxy Fan had met many times before—at first as foes, but always afterward as the warmest of friends.

"Have you gone out of your mind, my girl?" Gentry demanded, speaking again.

"Not unless you have, my boy," was her retort.

"But it can't be that you're ordering that piece of cruelty. You might kill a man with that pistol of yours if you thought that he deserved it; but I never thought that



Foxy Fan would countenance anything like torture or cruelty!"

"It shows that Gentleman Joe doesn't know all about Foxy Fan yet. And it shows that Gentleman Joe had better find out what sort of a game he is putting his hand into before he meddles! So take yourself out of the way, please. The game is full, and you weren't asked to chip!"

A faint attempt to smile caused the exquisite lips of the girl to part, showing her white teeth. At the same time she glanced back at the men who it appeared had been executing her orders upon the shivering, terrified wretch upon the horse.

"You have another rope," she said. "Go on with the picnic, and see how many inches Parson Jim will let you add to his body before he makes up his mind to open his lying lips!"

The man to whom this order was given did not hesitate.

A coil of rope appeared in the hand of one, and by a deft throw it was cast over the neck of the victim's steed, while one quickly caught the other end, and which was drawn taut as the other rope had been, across the body of the prisoner. This was done in a second's time, as if the men were waiting for the order and were fully prepared for it.

"Help!—save me, for Lord's sake!"

This appeal burst from the lips of Parson Jim.

Perhaps Gentleman Joe had never before been in so great uncertainty as to how to act at a critical moment as now.

He knew very little about the man called Parson Jim.

He only knew that he had come to Leadville as the partner of Kit Kimball. He knew that Kid-Glove Kit placed great confidence in him.

This was not all.

Whatever Foxy Fan's motives might be in thus imposing this torture upon her victim, Gentleman Joe could not stand idly by and witness it.

Yet from what he had known of Foxy Fan, he could not believe that she would do this unless she had what seemed to her sufficient provocation.



Gentleman Joe did not like to take a hand in such a game blindly, especially against one whom he had so long counted as a friend.

"Wait a minute, can't you? You can't really mean to do this thing, Fan. You are square and true and merciful, and there are a host of other good things that I might say about you with hardly a single bad one to put against them!"

Again that softer expression came into the eyes of Foxy Fan. But again her look became almost invincible, and she answered in a tone which was almost flippant in its defiance:

"Stow away that taffy, please, Gentleman Joe, and move on! Don't mind this man's prattle, gentlemen. He doesn't really mean anything by it. I have known him a good many years, and he hardly ever refused or opposed me in anything before. So just hitch up that rope as you did the first one, and then gently whip up the horse of Parson Jim! It's just a matter of finding out which will break first, the man's legs or his stubborn will. One or t'other has got to break before I'll let up on him a bit—just bear that in mind, Joseph, dear!"

Even while the words were passing the lips of the strange young woman, the order which was conveyed in them was being carried out.

The rope had been flung over the limb of a tree again, and the nervous horse upon which the victim was seated began to dance under the cut from a whip.

Again Parson Jim clung to the neck of his steed, striving to relieve the horrible strain upon his body which he felt once more.

For a single moment Gentry observed these manoeuvres undecided what to do.

But when he saw that the rope was actually beginning to strain upon the body of the man, and that there was actual danger of its doing him most painful injury, the Gilt-Edged Sport flung himself from the horse, again clutched the knife which he had dropped, and this time severed the rope which bound Parson Jim to the horse!

Simultaneously a sharp report rang upon the air, and



the knife dropped from Gentry's hand, while he recoiled with a low ejaculation of pain!

---

## CHAPTER II.

### A HEAD OUT OF THE WINDOW.

Nearly midway of the principal street of Leadville a quite pretentious dwelling had been erected.

It was three stories in height. The main floor was occupied by a store containing general merchandise, with a separate door as entrance to the office of the hotel which occupied the other two floors of the building.

On the topmost floor, in the remotest corner from the street, under the sloping roof, was a room which was small in dimensions and almost bare of furnishing.

There was one window covered by a paper curtain.

About half way up, this curtain was made grotesque by three holes, resembling in shape, size, and contiguity, the eyes and nose of a mask or of a human face, as you please.

The holes seemed to have been burned out, and probably their shape and location were accidental. Yet when the room was dark and the moon shone upon that side, there was something disagreeably significant about the appearance of those mimic eyes.

A nervous occupant of the room might imagine that they were a pair of eyes watching his every motion, and such a person might work himself into a most uncomfortable state of mind over the matter.

For something more than a month the room had had a tenant.

The face which had appeared at the window of the cabin of Kid-Glove Kit when Gentleman Joe was conferring with the young man was the tenant of this miserable room. After the possessor had finished his survey of the room and listened to the remarks which were made, he slunk away from the building, keeping out of sight as well as possible, and made his way to the out-of-the-way room in the Leadville hotel.

No sooner had he entered his room than he heard foot-



steps outside in the corridor and a knock sounded lightly on the door.

The tenant had barely time to throw himself into a chair, stretch out his legs, fling back his head, and begin to snore.

So sound was his counterfeited slumber that the one outside was obliged to knock twice and even three times much more loudly, before the one who was "playing 'possum" consented to give a snort of awakening which was accompanied by the exclamation:

"Hoo!—what!"

Then he rose from his chair, hemmed and hawed for a moment, heard the knock again, and finally fumbled at the door and opened it.

The one who entered was a veritable giant in stature, with rather a handsome face, piercing eyes, and clad in careless, yet becoming attire.

"Well, old man, always asleep?" the visitor asked, crossing the threshold and throwing himself into the very chair from which the other had just risen.

"Why, I don't believe I was, was I? It can't be, can it? For I have just come in myself and just threw myself down to rest my legs a bit—to rest my legs a bit, Mr. Henderson."

"Did you lock the door just now?" the one called Henderson asked.

"I always lock the door when I go in and when I go out."

"That's a good idea, Jared Joyce, if you have anything in here that might be stolen. They say there are lots of crooked cases drifting into Leadville, and they don't all go prospecting for gold, either."

"I don't know anything about any crooked cases, Mr. Henderson. I don't associate with them, and they don't seek to associate with me. I claim to be an honest and humble man, Mr. Henderson—an honest and humble man."

"All of which remains to be seen. Now let me see, Jared, how long have you been in town?"

"About a month, Mr. Henderson."

"And you came direct from your den in Denver?"



"I came direct from Denver, Mr. Henderson—direct from Denver."

"Would you mind telling me what it was in particular that brought you here? You know I don't reckon that you have been out with a pick and shovel digging among the rocks for lead or gold!"

"I haven't been prospecting in exactly that way, Mr. Henderson—not in that way."

Jared Joyce looked at his visitor as he uttered this remark, and his eyes had a very fox-like expression indeed.

Hime Henderson, the High Roller, as he was sometimes called, rose from his chair, shrugged his broad shoulders, and standing erect, his eyes came on a level with the round holes in the curtain.

The sight of them seemed to be unpleasant to him for he turned abruptly away, went to the door to see if it was locked, and then faced about suddenly and fixed his keen eyes upon Jared Joyce, the hermit miser from Denver.

"We are entirely alone, Joyce, and as I don't reckon that walls have ears, what's the matter with putting off all disguise and talking just what we mean? It takes a good deal of wind to talk in parables, as it were, and use figurative language when half the quantity of plain United States English would express our minds just as well and a good deal better. You came to Leadville on some kind of a snide game, you old shark, and you know it as well as I do. Just to let you see that you aren't in uncongenial company, I'll confess that I am at Leadville to make a scoop on my own account. I don't care a hooter who gets left in the scramble so long as I come out in the lead. What do you say to that, old man?"

Jared Joyce shook his head slowly and deprecatingly, though there lurked a grin around the corner of his mouth, giving a glimpse of his tobacco-stained teeth.

"An humble and honest man," he reiterated.

"And a notorious liar," added Hime Henderson, coolly.

"That's a pretty bold statement to make, Mr. Henderson—a pretty bold statement."

"But a true one, Mr. Joyce—but a true one," mimicked the High Roller.



"But we won't talk any more in that vein, if you please. I suppose that you came here to see me on business rather than for business, so perhaps it would be just as well for us to proceed to the business and not waste any more time in compliments."

It was beginning to grow dark in the little room, and the bare rafters overhead looked black and dismal enough.

They were festooned with cobwebs, and short as had Mr. Joyce's sojourn been in Leadville, the room already bore many striking resemblances to the dusty, cobweby den which he had occupied for so many years in the city of Denver.

It was as if Jared Joyce had brought with him some dust and spiders to make cobwebs for him, as well as his own rusty attire and the scraps of paper upon which he was always figuring—adding up columns of figures, never subtracting, as if they were a part of his worldly riches from which he could not bear the thought of taking anything.

He had a table very much like the one he had in the city, and he had managed to bring along some luggage, and to possess himself of many odds and ends of trumpery since coming to Leadville, so that one side of the room was pretty well occupied with boxes and bundles, which made it look as much like an old rag shop as anything else.

What the old miser could do with all these seemingly worthless articles was what no one seemed to know.

Perhaps it was not known what the boxes and bundles actually did contain.

There were those who suspected that the ragged clothing and such like which alone were visible to the casual eye really hid something else. Indeed, in Denver, there was a sort of prevailing opinion that Jared Joyce acted as a sort of "fence," or as a receiver of stolen goods, although not one jot of positive evidence could be brought against him.

"There's a point that I agree with you on. So now to business. I want you to help me set a trap."

"You want me to set a trap," repeated Jared Joyce.

"I said what I meant."

"What sort of a trap?"



scheme which the old man might be working out at that very moment might be interfered with in some way. With that possibility in mind, he unlocked the door, and again settled himself down to stare at the twin holes in the black curtain.

It seemed a long time as he sat thus, and it seemed as if gradually those eye holes in the curtain assumed a glare of human vengeance.

The worst of it was, that the High Roller, who had plenty of nerve under ordinary conditions, and who had never confessed fear of any other man, found it impossible to take his gaze from those holes in the curtain.

It was as if there were eyes on the other side of them with the power of fascination holding his own irresistibly.

In the room below were two Leadville boomers, smoking and talking over their schemes.

For an hour they had been throwing out the tobacco smoke until the little room was dense with it, and it had never occurred to them to open a window to let some of the smoke out or any fresh air in. One of them sat with his chair tilted against the wall with his feet resting upon the window-sill.

Suddenly he realized that the air was none too good to breathe, and by an effort he shoved up the window and thrust his arm and hand out, thrumming on the outside with his fingers.

The other boomer was sitting close by predicting great things for the real estate around Leadville, especially the lots which he was having laid out for settlement.

The other boomer at the window sat and listened and smoked and thrummed on the wall with his fingers.

Suddenly he drew in his arm, hemmed, rubbed his fingers together, smelt of them, then reached out and rubbed them on the outside of the house again, took them in, rubbed them together and smelt of them again.

Then he got up, went over to a table where there was a lamp which had not been lighted and struck a match.

By the light of the match he stared at his fingers, and then exclaimed:

"What in the devil is this stuff? Tell me, will you?"



The other boomer, in the intensity of his sudden curiosity, forgot all about his real estate schemes, and came over to the table and looked at his partner's fingers.

"It's sticky and gummy, and smells like—the devil!"

He held up his fingers to the nostrils of his partner, who recoiled with an oath.

"It smells more like blood!" the other exclaimed.

They stared at each other in the dark, then both went back to the window and both thrust an arm out and scraped some more of the stuff from the outside of the house onto their fingers.

Then they lighted a lamp, and they no longer had any doubts—some blood had run down the outside of the house.

The next moment the one who had discovered it thrust his head out of the window, and twisted his neck so he could look up at the window overhead—the window of Jared Joyce's den.

The window had been opened, and a face stared down with a stare that meant only one thing. It meant that it was the face of a dead man which had been thrust out of the window in Jared Joyce's den!

---

### CHAPTER III.

#### TRACKED.

Gentleman Joe's first glance was at his hand to see to what extent it had been injured by that unexpected and treacherous shot.

The bullet had grazed his forefinger at the joint, carrying away a patch of the skin, and momentarily paralyzing the whole arm.

That was all.

After satisfying himself as to this fact, he glanced at Foxy Fan, who had recoiled at the moment when she had fired the shot, and who had lowered her weapon.

"Have you gone out of your mind, girl?" Gentry demanded, turning his gaze full upon Foxy Fan.

"What makes you think that, Gentleman Joe?"



"Because if you had not lost your senses you would never have committed such an act as this! You would never have marked a finger of a friend with your marksmanship, good though it is!"

"Wouldn't I really, Gentleman Joe? Just because your finger was scratched by a bit of lead, you think that Foxy Fan has gone clear and sheer ugly, don't you? And you wouldn't ever trust her any more, would you?"

"I see no reason why I should trust a woman who once showed herself capable of treachery."

"That's the talk, Mr. Gentry! Now you're talking almost as good as you used to when you first came to Loadstone Ledge and I first set eyes on your classic countenance!"

"And it seems to me that you are going back to the character that you represented at that time. I remember that you were then quite ready to enter into any scheme against Joseph Gentry, of Denver. Can it be that all your friendship since has been but a pretense?"

"And what do you think?"

"I would rather think that Foxy Fan was a trifle insane than to think that she would turn on a friend like this."

"Much obliged, Gentleman Joe. It's a great comfort to know that you would rather think of Foxy Fan as a mad woman than as an out-and-out enemy to you. A great comfort, Gentleman Joe!"

The voice of the strange young woman was full of scorn.

Indeed, Gentleman Joe had never observed such a phase of character in Foxy Fan before.

As he had said, when they first met several years before at a camp called Loadstone Ledge, the girl had been ready enough to enter into any scheme against him.

But by his rare personality, he had won her friendship, which was seemingly undying in its character.

Foxy Fan was a woman capable of the strongest feelings.

Whom she hated she hated with her whole heart. If there was any one upon whom she bestowed love or friendship, she was capable of the same strength and steadfastness in these sentiments.

There was no one in the world whom Gentleman Joe



trusted more in the matter of fidelity and honorableness than he had done this girl.

Several times she had saved his life. Once or twice she had shown something like a momentary spitefulness toward him.

But such manifestations were always brief, and he believed them to be but passing in their character.

It might be that in the present case he had given her sufficient provocation for resentment.

He had certainly interfered arbitrarily.

Yet it was not like Foxy Fan to oppose him thus summarily, even under such conditions as these.

She had rather always consulted his judgment. She certainly had never made the slightest show of resisting him in any action which his judgment seemed to dictate.

The actors in the strange scene remained motionless during the exchange of words between Gentleman Joe and Foxy Fan.

The men who had been doing her bidding simply stood waiting for further orders.

They seemed to be fully determined to do what she bade them do without any remonstrance.

At the same time they appeared to have no particular interest in the matter otherwise.

Parson Jim, by that last stroke of Gentleman Joe's, had been set at liberty.

Yet for a moment he remained upon the horse, staring down at his liberator and then glancing at Foxy Fan in a dazed sort of a way as if he did not know whether it would be expedient for him to use the liberty given him.

A moment after he slid down from the horse, stood motionless beside the animal for an instant, and then throwing his slim body forward, he projected himself with the swiftness of a deer in a diagonal course across the open space and disappeared quickly beyond an adjacent building.

"There!" exclaimed the girl, still with that scornful tinge in tone and words. "Your pet and *protege* are at liberty, and have gone on their way rejoicing! And I suppose the Gilt-Edged Sport is happy since he has helped another injured innocent!"



It would have been impossible for a girl to throw more scorn into her words, or into the gesture which followed the speech, than this girl exhibited.

In a moment she thrust her weapon out of sight, waved her hand to the men who had been doing her bidding, and added in a sharp, commanding tone:

"Let him go, gentlemen! He is a friend and ward of Joseph Gentry, from Denver, and so we must not lay holy hands on him! No matter how many lies he may tell, no matter how many mean tricks he may play, no matter how many women he may offer insult to, Parson Jim is a daisy from Daisyville, and Joseph Gentry, from Denver, stands as his sponsor!"

The woman seemed to be almost laughing as she spoke these words, and so much expression was there in her voice that it had a magical effect on the crowd of bystanders, who during the brief space of time occupied by these events, had become augmented from all directions.

A faint cheer rose from the midst of the crowd and it soon rose in volume until nearly every voice in the crowd joined in.

Gentleman Joe had been in a crowd before this where he knew that nearly every one was against him.

In former times they had been men whose enmity he would have preferred to their friendship.

The present case was different.

He knew that there were some of the squarest men in Leadville in that crowd, and he felt more keenly stung by that cheer which seemed to indorse the speech of Foxy Fan than he had ever been before in his life.

It was not often that he had cause to regret a straightforward and courageous action.

But as he stood there in the fading light, with the scornful yet musical tones of Foxy Fan ringing in his ears, he felt as any other man would have felt under the circumstances—as if possibly he had made a mistake—as if it were better had he looked into the matter deeper before taking any action.

Yet it was not long that he allowed himself to feel thus. He realized that he had acted under his best judgment.



That, if the matter were to be gone over again, he would have taken no different course.

"The game is out, gentlemen, and the tale is told. It isn't quite certain which held the winning hand until we see how the stakes pan out. So wait and see, and don't bid too high on a blind deal."

That was all it seemed best to say then. No explanation that he could have made would have satisfied the crowd, for the motives under which he had acted were too high to be generally appreciated.

What troubled Gentleman Joe more than anything else was the fact that Foxy Fan had so misunderstood his intentions.

He felt that she must have some motive for her course which did not appear on the surface.

He was more desirous at that moment of meeting her alone face to face and seeking an explanation than for anything else in the world.

Therefore, though he turned away carelessly, as if he did not intend to take note of the movements of any one, nevertheless, he determined to observe whither the Faro Sharp went, and what she did.

Foxy Fan did not appear to desire to conceal her movements from any one.

She did not return directly to the cabin from which he had seen her issue. Instead she called the two men who had been doing her bidding and exchanged a few words with them in a low voice.

There were many in the crowd who were anxious to approach and speak with her. But she waved them smilingly back and refused to talk.

Her quarrel, if such it could be called, was between herself and Joseph Gentry, and it was plain that she would not accept any allies.

A minute afterward she walked out toward the street and strolled along as if seeking for some one she expected to meet.

In her saunterings she walked past the building where Jared Joyce's den was located.

She saw Jared Joyce come out, and watched his slender



bent form as he shambled swiftly down the street in the direction of the cabin of Kid-Glove Kit.

"If that isn't Jared Joyce, the old Denver money shark!" she muttered, as she stared after the fast-moving figure.

She turned back, and seemed to be hurrying in pursuit of him.

She saw him strike into a side street or path, and soon observed that he was making a detour with the evident intention of approaching a certain building from the rear.

That was characteristic of Jared Joyce. He never went to the front door of a building if there was a rear one through which an entrance could be obtained, or even a rear window through which he might peer.

"I'll take the straight road and get there as quick, no matter how fast he may wag his old legs. I'll catch him right at his spying, and make him tell me what it all means."

Muttering these words, she kept along the straight street and met Kid-Glove Kit face to face.

She had seen him before, and knew his name though she knew little about him. Still she was a trifle curious, and looked back to see whither he was going.

She kept on more slowly, looking back frequently, and had the satisfaction of seeing him approach the building where Jared Joyce's den was located.

Then she hurried on and approached the cabin from the street just as Jared Joyce approached it from the rear.

And Foxy Fan, stepping lightly around the building, saw the old money shark stand on tiptoes and peer through the window.

With the same light step, she approached him from the rear, and laid one hand upon his shoulder.

---

## CHAPTER IV.

### FARO SHARP AND MONEY SHARK.

It was quite dark now.

Jared Joyce faced about quickly when he felt that light hand upon his shoulder, but he was under too perfect self-



control to be surprised into uttering an ejaculation of any kind.

"Ah, miss, this is a great surprise—a great surprise!" he said, in a voice which was scarcely above a whisper.

"I should think it might be, Mr. Joyce, under the circumstances. May I have the boldness to ask who you are spying for now?"

"Really, miss, you aren't remarkable for your civility," retorted the old man, drawing his skinny lips tightly across his teeth.

"You must excuse me for that, for it's an old failing of mine. But when I see a man peering through a window into a private dwelling I take it that he's spying."

"I was only looking in to see if the inmate was there, that's all," said Jared Joyce, with another shrug of his shoulders.

"Well, did you make out?"

"I hadn't had time, Miss Calvert—I hadn't had time."

"Well, look ahead, and don't let me interrupt you. After you have done your spying, I want you to do some talking. Do you understand, old man?—I want you to do some talking!"

Jared Joyce hesitated and looked into the girl's face as if he were uncertain whether she was talking seriously or not.

Jared Joyce had seen Foxy Fan before, and this the reader may easily infer.

It was also certain that there were not many persons in the State of Colorado whom the old money shark would have been more reluctant to see at the present time than the Faro Sharp.

But he was fairly trapped, and there seemed to be no way of getting out of it. So he fell back on his "gall," and, tiptoeing up to the window, peered in again.

What he saw was a plainly furnished room, with a shaded lamp standing on the table. Nothing more.

"Well, did you see anybody?" Foxy Fan asked, as the old man faced her again.

"The house seems to be empty."

"Whom did you expect to find?"



"Why, Mr. Christopher Kimball, of course—Mr. Christopher Kimball."

"Is that the name that Kid-Glove Kit sails under?"

"It's his real name unless he's got another. It's the name he sailed into Leadville under, anyhow."

"Is he a friend of yours, Mr. Joyce?"

"Not exactly a friend, Miss Calvert—not exactly a friend."

"You came here to see him to-night, did you?"

"I just wanted to see if he was here—just to see if he was here."

"And if he had been in would you have gone in?"

"I might have considered it. I never do anything without considering, Miss Calvert."

"You seem to be as hard to get the truth out of as ever, Mr. Joyce. It's a pity that you can't practice a little in the rare and mighty art of telling the truth."

"You speak pretty plain, Miss Calvert. I can't say that I like that kind of talk, not from a young woman—not from a young woman."

"And how about it if I was old and wrinkled and ugly-looking, like you? With yellow teeth, and smoked tobacco and chewed it? And sitting round in rags and tags, with cobwebs and dust overhead, scheming how to cheat people, and how to sell things that belonged to somebody else and how to cheat thieves as well as honest people? If I was an old man like this, would you like me any better, Mr. Joyce?"

The attempt at a grin which the old money shark had put on faded away now, and the look which took its place was fairly fierce for an instant.

Something like an oath was hissed forth from betwixt his teeth, and he glared in silence for a moment at the girl who had nerve enough to tell him right to his face what a rascal she knew him to be.

"Do you know what I would do if you were a man?" he demanded, in a voice which sounded like the hiss of a snake.

"I expect that you would take to your heels and run, for you would never stand up and fight, not if I were a man."



And I don't believe you'll try it now, even if I am a woman. I wouldn't advise you to, anyhow, unless you are quicker at pulling a gun than I think you are. But you may talk and blaspheme all you want to, for my skin is thick and it won't hurt me any."

"I want you to get right out of my way, do you hear? I want you to get right out of my way."

"And where do you want me to get to?"

"I don't care. Out of Leadville would suit me better. What are you following me round and playing the spy for? What have I ever done to you that you should spy on me? Tell me that, will you?—tell me that!"

"You're playing the spy yourself, and that's one reason. I know that wherever you are there's a wicked game being played, and that you're trying to get the trumps all into your own hand. It's a good thing for you to have the truth told you, Mr. Joyce, even though you can't speak it. Even though it chokes you if you try."

"I tell you I want you to get out of my way."

"You'll have to tell me that a good many times before you get me to moving very fast. I am not even the least bit skeery to-night, Mr. Joyce—my nerves are as steady as the top of that mountain yonder. Let me advise you not to get me angry, for my disposition is real good now—I don't get angry more than once a day, and I don't kill a great many people even then. But you don't want to try my patience too far, now that my disposition is so sweet."

"What do you want of me, anyhow?"

"I wanted to know what you wanted of Kid-Glove Kit?"

"I wanted to know if he was here."

"And if he had been, what then?"

"I should have gone in and talked with him a bit—just talked with him a bit."

"And tried to get hold of some of his money, wouldn't you? I heard somebody say that he had quite a good deal that he hadn't been foolish enough to gamble away. I was in hope that he would come into my place and let me have a slap at it. But he was the shyest young tenderfoot in town, and that isn't the sort that I go fishing after. If **they** come in of their own accord and make their ante,



then I'll let them come. But I'm no shark like you, Mr. Joyce."

"Can't you say anything, Fanny Calvert, without putting an insult into it?"

"Perhaps I could, Mr. Joyce, but it would be hard work. It would be hard for me to do it and speak the truth and say what I meant when I was talking with you. It puts me in a bad place—It puts me in a bad place, as you say."

"I'll tell you this, Fan Calvert, that if you want to ask me anything, or make any sort of a proposition to me, or want to borrow any money, or want to give me any, or want to enter into any sort of a trade, I'm willing to talk with you. But I don't like to stand here and let you shoot wild with that sort of talk, for somebody might hear—somebody might hear!"

Jared Joyce sank his voice almost to a whisper as he spoke these last words.

"So they might, Mr. Joyce. And so I'm going to give away your whole game here at Leadville, and have you fired out of town heels over head—tumbled right down from a ten thousand foot level above the sea to a five thousand—a whole mile! What do you think of that? I'm meaning just what I say, too."

"I don't understand you."

"Then tell me the truth and I'll make it plain. What sort of game are you playing on Kid-Glove Kit, and what sort of a scoop are you going to make of him?"

"I wanted to make some sort of a trade with him—some sort of a trade."

"And get him to intrust his money to you?"

"Something of that sort—something of that sort."

"But you weren't doing it for yourself alone. Somebody has been putting you up to it. It must be an enemy of Kid-Glove Kit's. I don't know much about this Kid-Glove Sport, and I don't care very much about him, except that he is honester looking than some others, and the very fact that you are playing a game on him shows that he is decent. Now, who is putting you up to all this? Who is your partner in the game?"

"I can't say that I have a partner."



"But somebody knows that you came over to this place to-night. You left somebody back there in your den, and I know it. You came over here just prospecting, and then you were going back to report, or else you were going to take the game back with you, just like the old spider that you are."

Jared Joyce stared into the face of the girl, fairly speechless with surprise.

It seemed to him that she had divined nearly all of his plans in detail.

He wondered at that moment if she had been watching him. If she had been somewhere in the house and overheard the conversation between himself and the High Roller.

Upon no other hypothesis could he account for her immediate knowledge of the plan which had been formed and about which he had set to work.

"I really believe that you have been eavesdropping!" he exclaimed, in a husky voice.

"Do you, really?"

"I didn't know that you were in the building—thought you had hired a house all by yourself."

"And you did not know that I was in Leadville?"

"Yes, I heard it as soon as I got here."

"No, you didn't, old man, for I wasn't here then. I heard that you were here when I got here. I guess that's what you must have been thinking of, for I know it's awfully hard for you to tell anything just as it is when there's a way that it isn't. But now are you going to tell me about the one you were plotting with against Kid-Glove Kit in your den to-night? He was a pretty good-looking young fellow, but I didn't know his name."

Foxy Fan hazarded this remark wholly at random, for she did not know that there had been any one plotting with Jared Joyce against Kid-Glove Kit except what she inferred from the old man's actions.

And even if there had been some one in consultation with him she had not the faintest idea of who it could be. She had not yet had time to familiarize herself with the various schemes which were on foot in the new city.



"I haven't any right to give away names, Miss Calvert. Not of my special clients and confidants."

"Of course not, Mr. Joyce. I don't expect it, for I might be one of them some day, and I should hate dreadfully to have you give away my name if I had been in any kind of a terrible plot with you as an accomplice. So you needn't give any names. I don't care about them. But hadn't you just as lief tell me what it's all about? Is there a feud between that good-looking young fellow who was talking with you and Kid-Glove Kit? or is it a sort of vengeance scheme that is being worked out?"

"I really don't know, Miss Calvert."

"But you know they aren't friends?"

"They aren't friends—not exactly friends."

"And yet they have had some dealings together?"

"Yes. They have had some dealings together. I understand that Kid-Glove Kit has got the worst of it so far, and he'll get the worst of it still further if he stays in Leadville."

"If nobody comes to his rescue."

"If nobody comes to his rescue," added Jared Joyce, with a grin.

"But there might somebody take pity on him. A good-looking young woman like me, for instance."

"A good-looking young woman like you for instance," grinned Jared Joyce.

"I might as well say right here that I have taken pity on him. So march yourself back to your den. But if you meet Kid-Glove Kit, don't you dare to speak to him—do you hear?—don't you dare to speak one word to him."

"But what if he speaks to me?"

"Don't say anything back. Don't you seem to see him or hear him. Just you drag your old feet back toward your den and go into the cobwebby, dusty place, and stay there. Do you hear, old man? And stay there."

Foxy Fan had spoken these words in a tone which was fairly passionate. The words flowed from her lips in a perfect flood. It was one of those cases in which she was thoroughly warmed to the work which she had undertaken.



She realized full well what it was for a young man to come to such a place as Leadville with such a large sum of money in his possession or in his care.

She had heard just a rumor that Kid-Glove Kit had come to Leadville with quite a large capital to invest.

Keeping a gambling resort as she did—for she had opened a faro-bank here—she was sure to hear whatever talk there might be of such matters as these.

Therefore she had heard Kid-Glove Kit mentioned several times.

When she had met him a few minutes before, as she was approaching his dwelling, she had not known that it was he.

Yet she had felt by a sort of intuition that he was some one in whom she could feel an interest if she only knew more about him.

Indeed, there was something in his face which was of itself impressive.

Foxy Fan liked money, but she did not like it quite so well as she had done earlier in life. It might be that a strong reason for her continuing as a professional gambler was because she liked the excitement of the play.

There was an excitement in the exercise of her own skill, a zest in the chance involved, an enjoyment of the excitement of others, which was contagious.

And really she had been in that life so long that she was hardly herself apart from it.

Yet she no longer acted wholly without principle.

Many a young man had she warned to leave her board. Many a stake had she refused to play against, well knowing that she must win, and that the loser would be ruined by her success.

Therefore she felt that even while she continued in a profession which at the East would be considered fairly criminal, she was here doing a sort of mission work.

In other words, her resort was less dangerous than others—that those who entered it were taking an upward rather than a downward step.

It might be that Foxy Fan was as sharp as her name implied. But when it came to classing her with an old money



"A man trap."

"One that is likely to catch the first man that comes along and happens to smell the bait?"

"Not that. No, it must be a trap set with a bait which only one man will nibble at."

"And after you have got your man, what do you propose to do with him? I don't like to go into a game like this and put too many stakes on it until I have looked at my hand, Mr. Henderson—until I have looked at my hand."

"I aren't asking you to go it blind, old man. The man I want to catch is that young sport that has struck the town with more money than brains, and who at the East sails under the name of Christopher Kimball. But out here we cut down such names as those and tack a new handle onto them. So he has come to be called Kid-Glove Kit."

There was an odd light in Jared Joyce's eyes as he took these words from the lips of his visitor.

For most vividly came to his mind the speech which he had overheard from the lips of this same Kid-Glove Kit which the latter had addressed to Gentleman Joe but little more than an hour before.

It was certainly quite amusing to a disinterested individual like Jared Joyce, the Denver money-shark, to hear a man swearing vengeance against his enemy, and then within the same hour to hear that enemy declare his intention to entrap that vengeance hunter himself.

It promised a bit of excitement, and Jared Joyce liked anything of that kind.

In fact he liked everything that was tragical, provided that he was not in personal danger of becoming involved in the disagreeable consequences.

On this score the old miser was extra careful to keep his skirts clear.

The room had rapidly become dark.

The single window with the curtain drawn half way down, with the round holes in the curtain, had admitted all there was of the brief twilight until that at last had faded.

Now the odds and ends had become invisible in the dark



corners of the room and had assumed grotesque shapes, which, to imaginative eyes, might seem to move.

"What kind of a trap do you think I could help you set for the young man you call Kid-Glove Kit?" Jared Joyce asked, in his husky voice, which he had lowered to a key which was barely above a whisper.

"It is a trap to scoop in the little capital that he has first that I want," said Henderson.

"A snare to catch the money rather than the man—rather than the man, eh?"

"The money first, the man afterward. The situation is just this."

Hime Henderson, as he spoke these words, tilted his chair back, put his feet upon the table, and fixed his eyes upon the round holes in the curtain.

Then he went on.

"Christopher Kimball comes to Leadville with thirty thousand dollars in cool cash. What do you think of that, Jared Joyce?"

"Thirty thousand dollars!" whispered the old man, also staring at the holes in the curtain as if their staring gaze helped him to picture how big a pile of money thirty thousand dollars would make if heaped upon his own table.

"That's the sum in round figures. But it isn't all his, you understand. Young as he is, he has been appointed guardian of a younger woman or girl living somewhere in the East with the property. He is to take care of the money, and most likely he will marry the girl when she gets old enough if he don't get tired of waiting and marry somebody else."

"So the money is in his hands in trust?"

"That's it exactly. He has brought it here to Leadville, the wildest and woolliest region to be found, and with his kid gloves on, thinks to invest it and quadruple its value, and best of all, secure the everlasting gratitude of the girl, go back to the East, marry the girl, build a mansion, and live happy ever afterward. How is that for a programme, old man?"

"Very good indeed, if he can carry it out—if he can carry it out, Mr. Henderson."



dar  
U  
as if  
A  
1  
"There's the mischief of it, you old shark. What I want is for you to pull Kid-Glove Kit into your den here, and work one of your snide games on him as you would on any "fresh" in Denver. I understand that he has the money in cool cash right in the shanty that he has hired here. Had you heard anything about it?"

"I didn't suppose that there was so much of it, Mr. Henderson."

"But you had heard that he had all his money right here in the town with him?"

"I got some such idea as that—just an idea, you know."

"Oh, you're lying again, old man, I can see that. But never mind, since it don't fool anybody. But what about the scheme? Do you think you can make anything work? Right off, inside of twenty-four hours? It's quick or quit with me, remember that."

"How do you think that I can wheedle him into leaving so much money with me?"

"Get him in here on some sort of a pretext—work on his nerves—tell him that you're onto a plot to clean out his ranch and scoop in his boodle—wheedle him to leave his money with you! Tell him that you overheard a scheme between some mountain toughs, spelled with a big T, and that the only way for him to save his life and his cash is for him to leave the money here with you. Nobody would think of looking here in an old rag shop for thirty thousand dollars. I have given you only a rough draft of a scheme, but I'll trust you to work it up and put on the finishing touches."

"You are asking me to work too fast, Mr. Henderson."

"You'll work fast or not at all, at least not for me. I'll try some sort of a snide game myself if you don't take hold of this and go to work inside of an hour. So make up your mind quick, for you mustn't think that even a "fresh" is going to keep his cash hid in that way forever. He has Joseph Gentry, of Denver, to advise him, and though I don't reckon that he has told him much about where he keeps his cash, yet he will do it sooner or later, and we'll have Joseph Gentry as well as Kid-Glove Kit to come it over. Do you see, old man?"



Jared Joyce did see, and a great deal more than the dark patch of skylight which was observable through the holes in the curtain.

"If I were to assent to the scheme that you have laid out, Mr. Henderson, don't you see that I would lay myself liable to the law?—liable to the law, Mr. Henderson?"

"I see the whole of that. But it makes no difference. If you don't care to do it all you have to do is to tell me so, and I'll bid you good-evening."

"Just wait a bit, Mr. Henderson—just wait a bit. I said that I should lay myself liable. Yet I am a very careful man and I do nothing hastily—nothing hastily, Mr. Henderson."

"I suppose I'll have to let you fritter away your time talking as you choose, since it's your way to do that thing. But if you have any wits in your head I don't see why you don't understand that what is done must be done quickly, or the fat will be in the fire."

"Very true, Mr. Henderson—very true. If you wouldn't mind keeping shop for me just a few minutes I would like to step out and see how things look on the street. For just a few minutes, that's all."

"Go ahead, old man. Only if you could spare a light, it would make the room a little more cheerful for me while I'm waiting for you. I have got tired of trying to stare those eyes in the curtain out of countenance."

"I advise, Mr. Henderson, that you have no light. If you are at all timid, just step down stairs. I have a conscience that is such that I am never afraid of the dark—never afraid of the dark."

The High Roller shrugged his broad shoulders, got up out of his chair, and said:

"Go ahead, old man, and quit your talking. I'll stay here."

Jared Joyce unlocked the door, and went with his shuffling gait along the passage outside and down the stairs.

Hime Henderson locked the door after him, then went and seated himself again and stared at those holes in the curtain.

Then it occurred to him that if the door were locked the



shark like Jared Joyce, it was like putting light beside of darkness.

Under that impassioned utterance Jared Joyce fell back as if he had received a blow in the face.

A yellowish pallor crept over his cheeks, and he drew his breath quick and hard.

The girl followed him up, pointing her forefinger at him, her eyes shining brightly, her cheeks flushed, and all the force of her powerful will thrust into her face and movements.

"And now, old man, get a move on you. Don't tarry unless you want to feel very unhappy—unless you want to feel very unhappy, Mr. Joyce!"

He opened his lips as if he would speak.

But no sound passed them.

In another moment he turned away and slunk off with that swift, silent stride which was characteristic of him.

With the same detour which he had made in reaching the house, he returned to the street, while Foxy Fan watched him out of sight.

At last she followed, walking more slowly, and bending her steps toward the building where Jared Joyce's den was located.

Suddenly she heard a cry. The shout was taken up, coming as it did from within the building, and repeated from the street and she saw numerous figures hurrying toward the spot. The same cry and the same words were taken up and repeated, and they seemed to have the power of attracting the inmates of every house, saloon, and gambling place, until the street was crowded. Every man and woman was running toward the building where Jared Joyce's den was located.

And the word which Foxy Fan heard and which had such a powerful effect upon the people was this one:

"Murder!"

---

## CHAPTER V.

### THE NIGHT FLIGHT

In the midst of that rushing throng was a young girl with one of the sweetest faces to be found in all Leadville.



She had come forth from another hotel near the one where the crime had taken place.

She was plainly clad, and her hands showed that she was a toiler.

Her name was Mollie Elliot. She was barely seventeen, and rather than to do anything less honest, or live on the charity or kindness of friends, whichever name one may be pleased to give to voluntary idleness, she was doing the common drudgery of washing dishes and the like.

It was honest, and the wages were good—indeed wages are good for any kind of work in a new mining town, and Leadville was still new.

So Mollie was making a living and an honest one, and it gave her a chance to wait and to hope.

What it was that Mollie Elliot was waiting and hoping for will be made clear to the reader as the story progresses.

Attracted by that terrible cry, she had run out upon the street with the others.

She was elbowed and jostled by many young women, many of whom were less wholesome in character than herself, and some of whom called her by name. She was so pretty and sweet and innocent that every one liked her, and to many she was well known by name.

To a young girl so pretty there were many who would have been willing to lend a helping hand, and there were those who would have defended her against insult.

She thrust her slender form through the crowd and found herself in the door-way by the side of a waiter girl in the hotel where the crime had been committed.

In a few words the story of what had taken place was told her.

Then a cry was taken up—and it was one which made her cheeks grow pale.

“Find the galoot and string him up to the first tree!”

It so happened that trees were scarce in Leadville, for it should be known that this is one of the loftiest towns in the world, and it comes very near being above the tree-line, for the snow-clad mountain-tops are in plain sight from Leadville's streets.



Even as this terrible cry rang out, a form was seen to leap out from the window, alighting in the very midst of the crowd underneath, springing through the throng, darting hither and thither in a zig-zag course, jostling and pushing its way through with a display of athletic skill which was simply marvelous.

At first no attempt was made to stop the fugitive.

In fact they thought that he might be in pursuit of the fugitive, and so they made way for him instead of closing in on him as they would have done had they known the truth.

He thus got through the thickest of the throng before any of those nearest him understood that he was the one against whom the clamor was being raised.

Then the face of affairs changed.

Some of those who had opened the way for him sprang in pursuit. And a chorus of cries rose on the air until the air shook with the thunder of voices.

Mollie Elliot saw this figure as it darted away, and instinctively felt that it must be the one whom they took to be the murderer.

She recognized him as Kid-Glove Kit--and she had seen Christopher Kimball when he had first come to town, and in her heart of hearts she thought him the finest man upon whom she had ever looked.

It was no wonder then that Mollie Elliot turned white and grew faint as she realized that the man she admired so much was the fugitive in the midst of such an angry and unreasonable crowd as this.

Yet not for an instant did she dream that it could be possible that he was the murderer.

She would have thought herself capable of such a crime as soon as to attribute such capability to Christopher Kimball.

He soon disappeared from sight, and she could not tell whether his pursuers were gaining on him or not.

She heard several revolver-shots in the air, but she knew that they could not shoot in a direct line or in any direction in such a crowd without endangering the lives of many besides the fugitive.



The girl's mind was full of a vague desire to assist the young man whose life was in such jeopardy.

She knew that the temper of the crowd was such that it would be difficult to obtain a fair hearing for him if he should be taken then.

Innocent though she believed him to be, she knew that under such conditions, the feeling of the crowd would have more to do with the outcome than any evidence that could be brought to bear upon the case.

With this vague desire uppermost in her mind, she continued her way through the throng, being jostled and pushed, and in momentary danger of having her slender form thrown down and trampled under the feet of the crowd.

And, indeed, this is the fate that would have overtaken her if it had not been for a helping hand near.

Once she tripped and fell. In another instant she would have been trampled on by that rushing throng if a hand had not seized and jerked her to her feet, and a voice exclaimed:

"Have a care, gentlemen, or somebody else will have a murder on his hands."

The speaker was Gentleman Joe.

In another moment the girl was drawn aside and out of danger.

Without a word, Gentleman Joe conducted her back to the hotel from which she had hurried.

As they reached the door they saw Foxy Fan standing in the street and gazing up at the window of Jared Joyce's den.

"Do you know anything about this murder, young lady?" Gentleman Joe asked, as he paused at the door with Mollie.

The girl's face was very pale, her eyes bright and shining, and her voice clear and firm as she said:

"I know it wasn't committed by him."

"You mean by the one they are chasing?"

"Yes. Christopher Kimball would never have taken any man's life in that fashion."

"In what fashion? I haven't heard very much but rumors about this affair. Do you live in the house?"



"I work here."

"Who discovered the murder?"

"Two claim boomers in the room underneath Jared Joyce's den."

"So it was committed in the room of that old man, was it?"

"Yes. In Jared Joyce's den."

"Where is the old miser at the present time?"

"I don't know."

"Wasn't he in the room?"

"No. He went out a little while before. He left the one who was murdered in his room alone. I suppose he intended to come back pretty soon."

"And it was Hime Henderson, the one called the High Roller, who was killed?"

"Yes, he's the one. He's a miserable wretch, Mr. Gentry."

"So you know something about him?"

"I know that he is a miserable wretch. I know that——"

"Well, what else?"

The girl's face was flushed vividly as she interrupted herself.

She now compressed her lips as if she was fully resolved to say nothing more.

"What were you about to say?" Gentleman Joe persisted.

"Nothing, sir, about that. All I want to say is that the one who was killed deserved the killing, though of course I wouldn't countenance the crime. And that the one who they say committed the murder is the very soul of honor."

"Then Chris Kimball is a friend of yours?"

"He stopped here at the hotel when he first came from New York. I saw him then. And in one or two acts he showed his character in such contrast to that of Hime Henderson that Mr. Kimball is like light and Mr. Henderson like darkness."

"You seem to feel very strongly over this, miss. But unless you can give some direct testimony in the young man's favor, I'm afraid your friendship won't help him any."

"I can testify to his nobility of character."



"That sort of testimony wouldn't answer in such a crowd as this, and under these conditions. If you should say that Kid-Glove Kit didn't come into the hotel until after the crime was committed, that might count a little."

"But I can't say that, Mr. Gentry."

"Then he was here?"

"Yes. He came just a little while before the murder."

"And you didn't see him again until he jumped from the window just now?"

"I saw him when he came in, but he didn't see me at all, and he didn't speak."

"Do you know where he went when he came into the house?"

"He went up stairs. I think——"

Again the girl interrupted herself and compressed her lips.

"Tell the rest of it, my girl, for the truth won't do any hurt if you tell it to me. I am not advising you to tell it to the crowd or before other ears. All I wish is to see justice done here. For let me tell you now that I don't believe that Kit Kimball would have done this thing. And yet—and yet, my girl, I have perhaps better reasons than any one else to know how Christopher Kimball hated Hime Henderson!"

Gentleman Joe lowered his voice as he spoke these words.

They were standing close to the building by the step, and Foxy Fan still stood near by, but not close enough to hear what passed between them.

While Foxy Fan pretended not to see them, it was evident that she knew they were there, and that she was waiting to see either one or the other of them after they should separate.

It might be that she was curious as to what was passing between them. But if such was the case she showed admirable self-control in not attempting to catch one word of what was said.

For all the while that they were talking Foxy Fan was singing softly to herself, making just enough noise to make their voices inaudible to her.

"If you know anything about this crime, girl, you can't



do better than to open your lips and tell me about it, and tell me the truth."

"I told you that I knew Kid-Glove Kit to be the very soul of honor," the girl reiterated.

"I know you told me that. But that testimony wouldn't count, you may be sure of that. Do you think that Christopher Kimball went up to Jared Joyce's den when he came into the house?"

The girl hesitated, her lips shut tight, her cheeks pale, her eyes drooping.

"Tell me what you think. You needn't tell me you know it's so, or that it isn't unless you know," added Gentleman Joe.

"I'll tell you the truth about it, sir," the girl said, her voice low and tremulous. "I think he must have gone up to Jared Joyce's den."

"And you think he must have been there when the crime was committed?"

"No, he couldn't have been there then."

"And why not?"

"Because he would have been the murderer if he had been. And he wasn't."

A faint smile flickered across the face of Gentleman Joe, although he felt very little like exhibiting mirth.

"I'm afraid such logic as that wouldn't help the young man's case any if you were to talk in that way at the trial. But never mind. He isn't on trial, and I'm only sifting after facts, so that if he is innocent I can help him. If he's guilty, I fear I can do nothing for him."

"But he isn't guilty."

"I hope not. Yet I know he has more provocation than any one else. But such a man as Hime Henderson is likely to have more than one enemy in the world and more than one enemy in Leadville. The best way to exonerate Kid-Glove Kit is by finding out the one who really committed the crime. That would clear his skirts without a doubt."

"That's so. I think the real man must either be in the house now, or outside with the crowd. Perhaps he is in pursuit of Kid-Glove Kit himself."

"If he's very crafty he might do that. But ~~after~~ a man



has done such a deed as that he is apt to lose some of his craftiness. He doesn't often have the nerve to face a crowd if he has a chance to slink away out of sight. It is more than likely that he is still about the house, or that he has gone away, his retreat covered by the confusion."

"And will you help me to defend Kit Kimball?" Mollie Elliot asked, looking straight into the face of Gentleman Joe with such a gaze of appeal that he found it hard to say a word that might bring her disappointment.

"If he's innocent I will help him, but if he's guilty I'm afraid I can't."

"But if you don't know whether he is guilty or not?" she questioned.

"I shall try to keep him out of the way of the crowd until the truth is clear. If he is guilty he will avoid seeing me; if he is innocent he will want to, and he will do it."

"Then you are a friend of Kid-Glove Kit?"

"I am a friend of Kid-Glove Kit."

"And about Hime Henderson?"

"I know nothing in his favor. As you say, he deserved killing if any man did. But I wouldn't have his murderer escape, not if it was Kid-Glove Kit himself."

"I believe that you will help me, Mr. Gentry. I am willing to be honest with you, for I don't think you will take advantage of me. I will tell you what I really know."

The girl hesitated for a moment, and Gentleman Joe looked eagerly down into her face, waiting for her to go on.

"I know that Kid-Glove Kit went up to Jared Joyce's room," she said, speaking almost breathlessly. "I don't know whether he came out before the crime was committed or not, for I didn't follow him. But I do know that somebody else went up soon after he did—I don't know whom, but I am pretty sure that the person went into Jared Joyce's room."

"This was before the murder was discovered?"

"Yes, half an hour before. I know that Jared Joyce went out, and that Kid-Glove Kit came in right after. Soon after Kid-Glove Kit came the other one."

"You didn't see the other?"

"I only heard him—I only heard him go up one flight, then up the next one, and I ran up the first flight a little



curious as to what it was about—to know why so many were going up to Jared Joyce's room. Then I heard Joyce's door open, and I know some one went in, for there were no footsteps outside."

"Could you be sure that it was his door?"

"I'm sure that it was his door."

"This is an important fact, miss. If there should be a straight trial in this case you would be an important witness. I hope that you won't have to be called against Christopher Kimball, for it would be a hard place to put you in."

"I would never testify against him!"

"Don't say that, for you may have to. But after what you have just told me there is at least a chance that somebody else went into Jared Joyce's den, and that makes it possible that somebody else committed the crime. I don't think that Kit would do it, and about the somebody else we know nothing."

Gentleman Joe did not push his questioning further then, seeing that the girl was deeply agitated, and not wishing to annoy her further.

He conducted her to the door of the hotel, and she entered, leaving him alone.

He hesitated a moment, however, undecided whether to go up to the scene of the crime or not, when he heard a slight sound above his head and glanced upward.

As he did so, something dropped from above, and he recoiled just in time to avoid the object, which would otherwise have smitten him to the earth.

---

## CHAPTER VI.

### FOXY FAN'S FOXY PLAY.

The thing which dropped from above and which so nearly struck upon the head of Gentleman Joe was a square wooden box, nailed up tight, and evidently filled with heavy material.

The object fell upon the ground at the feet of Gentleman Joe as if the contents were breakable.

Gentry sprang out into the middle of the street and



glanced upward to see from whence the missile had fallen. There were only two windows in a direct line above where the box had fallen.

Both of these were open, and both of them opened into a corridor or passage-way of the building instead of a room. And there was no one in sight at either of these windows.

Gentleman Joe's next move was to spring into the building with the purpose of ascending the stairs and making a search for the one who had made this attempt upon his life—for the dropping of the heavily laden box in that manner must have been with no other intention.

At the head of the first flight he met Jared Joyce face to face. And the old money shark found it hard to appear glad to see him.

"Why, it's Mr. Gentry! Quite a surprise!" the old man articulated, while his hawk-like eyes took in every expression and point of Joseph Gentry's face and figure.

"But you don't look as if it was a pleasant surprise, Mr. Joyce. You needn't hurry down those stairs, for there's nobody wants to see you any more than I do at the present minute."

Joyce would have hastened down the stairs as if there was a particular engagement which he was behindhand in filling, had not Gentry blocked the way with a firmness which the old man did not have the nerve to resist.

"I was in something of a hurry, Mr. Gentry—something of a hurry," said Joyce, nervously.

"You needn't be, for the minutes of your life aren't important enough to call for any great amount of hustling, I reckon. Did you just come down from your den on the top floor?"

"I was just coming down. You know something unpleasant happened up there—very unpleasant, Mr. Gentry."

"Rather unpleasant for the one it happened to. I understand that you weren't in the house when it happened?"

"Oh, no, I wasn't 'round. Nothing of that kind ever happens when I'm 'round—not when I'm round. It's very unfortunate that it should happen in my room. It makes it very unpleasant, Mr. Gentry—very unpleasant."



"And does that account for your hurrying to get down stairs just now?"

"I had something to communicate."

"Then go ahead and communicate. You won't find a pair of more willing ears than mine, though you may find larger."

"But this was for a particular person—a very particular person."

"You won't find anybody any more particular than I am, Mr. Joyce. The fact is that I am so mighty particular that I couldn't let you think of going down stairs and out of this shanty and communicate with anybody until you had first had a little confab with me. It strikes me that if there is any one in Leadville who has a clew to the killing of the High Roller in your den, you're the man that has it. You know well enough that Kid-Glove Kit didn't do it."

"How should I know that, Mr. Gentry?"

"Because you know that he wasn't here at just the right minute."

"That's where you are mistaken, Mr. Gentry. All the evidence that I can bring to bear on the case goes pretty dark against Kid-Glove Kit—pretty dark."

"But where were you just now when that box was thrown out of the window with the evident intention of braining me?"

"With the intention of braining you, Mr. Gentry?"

"You needn't repeat my phrases if you do your own. And I would recommend that you be a little economical with your wind in the present instance for the time may come when you will have better need for it."

"What do you mean, Mr. Gentry?"

Jared Joyce looked uneasy and conscious, yet not exactly frightened. Gentleman Joe, watching him closely, was at a loss to make out the facts from the man's face.

Not that he suspected Jared Joyce of being responsible for the attempt upon his life.

Jared Joyce was a cautious man. Gentleman Joe had had many dealings with him, mostly involving money transactions, and it was not at all to the advantage of the old money shark to have anything happen to Gentleman Joe.



Yet that Jared Joyce knew something about the box which had been pushed out of the window and which had so nearly fallen upon the head of Gentleman Joe, the latter was almost certain from the queer look upon the old man's face.

"Come along, old man, and we'll just look over the ground together. You have a pair of sharp eyes, and there's nothing particularly the matter with your wits except that you have abused them by making them serve you sometimes in crooked work. We'll see in a minute whether that box was thrown out of this window or out of the one up another flight!"

Gentleman Joe linked his arm within one of those of Jared Joyce, and drew him along toward the window at the end of the corridor.

A glance showed him that no box had been shoved from the ledge of that window. Therefore it must have come from the one above.

The eyes of the old man twinkled strangely as Gentleman Joe remarked this fact, yet he held back a little as our hero hurried him toward the flight of stairs leading to the next story.

In the corridor of the next flight Gentleman Joe had no difficulty in finding conclusive evidence that it was from this window that the box had been thrown.

There was a mark upon the floor showing where it had set, the same showing plainly in the dust that was all around the spot, leaving only a small square place clean. On the window ledge were recent scratches which also showed that the box had been pushed through it.

On the part of those who did the domestic work about the building no great degree of cleanliness had been used, and there was plenty of dust along the whole length of the corridor.

There were no rooms at that end which were in use, and consequently there were few tracks. These were sufficient, however, to show that one person had been recently to that window, and only one.

These tracks, then, must have been made by the one



who made the vicious yet crafty attempt on the life of Gentleman Joe.

Under some conditions the latter would not have been so urgent in his search for the one who attempted the deed.

It was no unusual thing for him to have attempts made to destroy his life. In some places there might well have been a dozen who would have been capable of it.

But here at Leadville he was not aware of having made any enemies. Therefore there could not have been many who would have so strenuously desired his death as to have attempted to accomplish their design in that manner.

"What do you think of this, Mr. Joyce?" Gentry demanded, pointing out the marks upon the floor and window ledge which he had discovered.

The eyes of the old man were still twinkling in that peculiar manner, and he avoided the glance of his companion.

"I don't really know anything about it, Mr. Gentry," said the old man, in his husky tones.

"Now about these tracks—what's the matter with my taking the measure of them?"

Gentleman Joe took a pocket rule and deliberately measured the tracks, while the other watched him with an increased show of uneasiness.

"Now, Mr. Joyce, let's have your measure," was Gentry's next remark.

"My measure, Mr. Gentry?"

"Yes, your measure, Mr. Joyce. So just shove one foot out here, and don't be bashful, for yours isn't as big as mine or any better shape."

Jared Joyce seemed to hesitate, and then complied with the request.

As Gentleman Joe expected, the foot of the miser was nearly a size smaller than that which had made the tracks, and very different in shape.

Indeed, so much would have been evident at a glance, and Gentleman Joe merely made the measurement to observe the behavior of Jared Joyce rather than with the expectation of making any immediate use of the result.

"I hope you don't find anything against me in that



measurement, Mr. Gentry—nothing against me?" interrogated Jared Joyce, showing his teeth in a satisfied grin.

"Nothing at all, Mr. Joyce, and I didn't expect to, except what I found in your face. Whatever else I might mistake you for, it would never be for a fool, and you would have been more than foolish to have made that attempt even if you had wanted to wipe me out of existence ever so bad. That thing was done by a bold man, and you are not bold. A bold man may sometimes, though rarely, do a bold thing and escape the consequences. But if a timid man or a coward attempts a bold thing he is as sure to be caught as he is to live. That bit of warning which I have gained from many years of observation you are free to make use of if you wish. Now let us take a look into your den."

"But the murdered man isn't there now, Mr. Gentry."

"I suppose not. I suppose you had him hustled out of there lively just for the name it would give you if he staid there. But I said that I wanted to look into your den."

"Very well, Mr. Gentry. You can't say that I ever refused you admittance whenever you came to see me. You can't say that I ever have."

"I can't say that you ever have, though there have been times when you have pretended to be sound asleep and snoring so loudly that no amount of hammering on the door would wake you up. I don't suppose that's refusing admittance, though it is just as good as long as I wasn't able to get in. But we won't argue the matter, Mr. Joyce."

With his arm still linked within that of the old money shark, Gentleman Joe led him to the other end of the passage and himself opened the door to the den of Jared Joyce.

Not until the door was closed and locked did Gentleman Joe cast a look about the room.

This was the scene of the murder. There was the chair which had been occupied by the High Roller, and opposite was the one which Jared Joyce generally used.

There was the window ledge still smeared with blood, while down the side of the building the life fluid had drizzled in its stringy, sticky way, smearing the wall in many places, especially at the spot near the window of the



two real estate boomers whose fingers had come in contact with it.

It was out of that window that the head and shoulders of Hime Henderson, the High Roller, had been seen protruding by the boomer who had glanced up from the window underneath.

Gentleman Joe had already overheard so many of the facts as related by one of the boomers to a curious crowd, and so far Gentry knew the circumstances under which the crime had been discovered.

He was equally sure that Jared Joyce was not in the room at the time when the murder had been committed, or even under the roof, for there was abundant evidence that the old man had gone out and that Hime Henderson had been heard to walk across the floor several times after the departure of the tenant.

Nothing in the room had been molested since the crime except that the body of the victim had been borne out of it, and carried into a vacant apartment on the same floor, where it now lay watched over by an official belonging to the house and gazed upon by many pairs of curious eyes.

The dark curtain still hung half way down, the lamp still burned on the table, and the round holes in the curtain still gazed in on the scene, the only witnesses of the tragedy which had been enacted there.

There were no signs of a struggle.

Hime Henderson had been stabbed to the heart, and must have died almost instantly. This, at least, was the first theory, though there was a cut upon the back of his neck which had bled profusely. But it had hardly been noticed at first since it was not deep enough to have been fatal.

A little later, he reached a different conclusion from that which had been jumped at readily by the first observers.

It was to the effect that the High Roller had first had his senses benumbed by a blow on the head which had struck almost exactly upon the victim's crown.

Then a hasty cut had been made with a knife on the back of his neck, either purposely or by accident, and



that had been the cause of the bleeding since the man would not have bled very much after death.

Soon after this, within half a minute probably, the heart blow had been dealt, and that had been quickly fatal.

We here anticipate this hypothesis of Gentleman Joe's to avoid the necessity of going over it again.

We will now return to the point whence we momentarily digressed.

After having made a silent survey of the room Gentleman Joe turned to Jared Joyce, and said:

"There are a few more questions that I want you to answer. You can do it if you will with a small expenditure of breath, and as I hinted before, you will find it well to be economical in that respect."

Jared Joyce realized that he was in for it. Nothing was more painful for him than to be obliged to answer questions, especially when the questioner was one whom he could not bluff.

He knew that nothing but the truth unadorned would satisfy Joseph Gentry, of Denver.

Gentleman Joe drew up the other chair, the same which had been occupied but a short time before by the High Roller, and with his gaze alternating between the face of Jared Joyce and those round holes in the curtain, which seemed to have fixed their gaze upon him, he began delving for the truth.

At the end of half an hour Gentleman Joe got up and looked down on the shivering, cowering man before him whom he had been giving a terrible tongue-lashing.

"Now I'll let up on you, old man, and you may consider yourself lucky that I have been so easy with you."

Jared Joyce was in a perspiration, his cheeks had assumed the hue of death, and his eyes were fairly glassy in their stare, to such an excoriating, searching cross-examination had he been subjected by the Gilt-Edged Sport.

"Are you through, then, Mr. Gentry?" the old man asked, huskily.

"I'm through with the questioning, Mr. Joyce, but I've a word of advice left."

"A word of advice, Mr. Gentry—a word of advice?" the



old man said, cowering back in his chair as if he had been threatened with a whip instead.

"I won't bear on very heavy with that part of it, old man, for you don't look as if you had nerve enough left to stand it. But remember this. Some day you will be called to repeat before a jury, or at least under oath what you have just told me. Do you realize that, old man?"

Jared Joyce nodded but did not speak.

"And remember that you must make your statement, then, agree line for line and word for word with what you have just told me for I shall be there to hear it."

Jared Joyce nodded again.

"You don't know who killed Hime Henderson—so much is certain. But you do know that you and he were hatching up some sort of a plot against Kid-Glove Kit. You know that there was a conspiracy against Christopher Kimball, and that you were in it up to your neck, or would have been if the High Roller hadn't been killed."

Jared Joyce sat silent, still staring glassily into the face of the man before him.

"Now I'll leave you, old man, and here's my word of advice. Now that you're in a new town take care that you don't get a new blot on your record. The sort of crooked business that you have started out in here must be stopped. Clear the trumpery out of this room, clean it up, and deal straight or don't deal at all. You can buy and sell goods and lend money, but if you plot a scheme, or handle goods that don't belong to you or the one who put them into your hands, or enter into any conspiracy, or do any of your crooked business, you'll hear something drop, and it'll drop mighty hard!"

Without another word, Gentleman Joe turned the key in the lock, gave a parting glance at those holes in the curtain, which for him, like every one else, seemed to have a species of fascination, and then made his way to the room where the victim of the crime lay.

An hour later he went out upon the street of Leadville and found that the excitement had greatly subsided—or at least the noise of it.

There were still knots of men standing in door-ways



talking the matter over, and it was said that a dozen armed men had gone out in pursuit of Kid-Glove Kit.

Gentleman Joe, with his head full of plans and his brain so active that he felt he must be alone to properly overhaul his plans before he could make them effective, made his way toward the other hotel which he had made his stopping-place.

The house in question stood farther from the centre of the new town than did the one where the crime had been committed.

It was indeed a quiet sort of a house of a fairly respectable character, and with nothing worse than a gambling den on the first floor.

A side street came out into the main thoroughfare near this house, and as Gentleman Joe passed this a slender form emerged from the shadows and a hand was laid lightly upon his arm.

"Foxy Fan!" came from the lips of the Gilt-Edged Sport.

"Come with me!" she said, speaking barely above a whisper.

"Why should I do that?" he asked, looking at her somewhat coldly.

"Come Joseph, don't be cranky. Can't you let by-gones be by-gones? You won in our little difficulty the first of the evening as you are always sure to do. Now I am humble enough to plead for peace, and tell you so. Come with me, Joseph, and I'll show you something that will make your eyes as big as saucers."

"What is it, Fan?"

"I wouldn't tell you for a thousand ducats! Come and see."

"Well; but I can't spend much time. I want an hour to myself."

"Much obliged, Mr. Gentry, for the hint. But you will not have to be annoyed by my detested company long. But come now—come now!"

Gentleman Joe followed her.

She conducted him to her dwelling, which was of more liberal dimensions than most of those on the outskirts of the new town.

In the front part she had opened her faro-room. In the



rear she had several rooms for her own use—where she did her housekeeping, she said.

The resort being locked, of course was vacant.

She led Gentleman Joe straight across the faro-room, having locked the entrance as soon as they had passed through it, and then into a smaller room in the rear.

This door she closed and locked also—bolted rather, for the fastening upon it was extra secure and strong.

Then she clapped her hands together, unmistakably as a signal.

Instantly one of the broad, short boards of the floor was lifted out and a man sprang into sight.

It was Kid-Glove Kit!

## CHAPTER VII.

### PROBING FOR POINTS.

"What did I tell you, Gentleman Joe!" Foxy Fan exclaimed, with an arch glance up into the face of our hero.

Kit Kimball it was who confronted the Gilt-Edged Sport.

Yet he hardly looked like himself.

In running the gantlet of those eager pursuers he had torn his clothes, lost his hat, and got his face and hands cut and bruised and smeared with blood and grime.

And he had had no chance to clean himself up, for Foxy Fan had insisted on his keeping himself scrupulously out of sight.

The room in which they were had one small window, and that, instead of opening to the outside of the building, got its light in the day-time from another window in the room beyond.

"I didn't mean to show myself even to you," said Chris Kimball, as he threw himself into a chair while Gentleman Joe still grasped his hand with a warmth that could not be other than genuine.

"Why didn't you intend to see me?" Gentry asked.

"Because I was afraid that you, like all the others, would feel dead sure that I did this thing that they're accusing me of. In fact, I don't know of any one who would have a better reason for thinking so than you!"

"You may be right, Kit. So it has come out just as I



told you it might do when I warned you."

"I never thought of such a thing, Mr. Gentry."

"I didn't suppose you did. I knew it was only the idle talk of a youngster who hadn't learned to bridle his tongue. But the mischief of it is, Kit, that I wasn't the only one who heard that speech."

The young man recoiled, and if it was not for the grime upon his face it might have been seen that he was deathly pale.

"What is that you are saying?" he demanded.

"There was a listener to our little confab or at least to a part of it. And your threat against Hime Henderson was overheard!"

"Are you sure of it?"

"I couldn't very well be any surer since that one repeated to me the very words we used not more than twenty minutes ago."

"Who was it? Tell me that. Does he think I did it?"

"One question at a time, Kit, and they'll last longer. The one who overheard it was Jared Joyce, the old Denver money shark."

"Then he will surely think I did it."

"But he knows better."

"How does he know?"

"Because he confessed to me that somebody else had a motive—that you couldn't have very well been in the building, at least not in that room, when the crime was committed."

"He said that to you, did he?"

"He said that to me."

"And only just now?"

"Only just now."

"Then I have a witness in my favor if I fall into the hands of the men of Leadville."

"A rather poor one, since the man's story wouldn't be believed on account of the game which he was intending to play himself. If he was forced to tell the whole truth his testimony would be almost worthless unless it was backed up by somebody else. Still he may be made useful. He has been made so now by confirming my hopes concerning you."



"Then you really thought that I might have done it?"

"Who wouldn't have thought so?"

"But you don't suspect me now?"

"I don't suspect you now. So there are two who believe in your innocence, though neither of them is able to give testimony that would be of much use in a hot-headed crowd such as that which you are likely to fall into. But why in the name of wonder didn't you get out of Leadville instead of staying here?"

"Simply because I couldn't, Mr. Gentry. There are horses and men all around the town. I am not enough used to these altitudes to be a good runner here. What effort I had to make I thought would be the death of me."

"Well, you dodged them, anyhow. But it looks as if you had about got to the end of your rope. What are you going to do next?"

"I am going to ask your advice."

"And so throw the whole business onto my shoulders! Well, I am used to that sort of thing, and I suppose I can carry it. But I have got to know a little more about it, and about you, before I take too much risk on your account. If a crowd of men should come in here now and attempt to haul you out and string you up, as they would be likely to do unless we gave them time to cool off, I should have to make a fight for you even if I thought that you were guilty. I should do it just because I don't favor that kind of justice. But when it comes to making an out-and-out scheme for getting you out of this scrape, I shouldn't want to do it without knowing why."

Kid-Glove Kit sank back in his chair.

He still seemed to be out of breath with his exertions. As he had said, he was unused to these altitudes, and apparently he was a man of limited lung capacity.

"You needn't help me if you don't wish to, Mr. Gentry. You needn't give me your advice. I have managed to keep my neck out of the noose through the hottest part of the fight on my own account, and I suppose there's a chance of keeping up the connection between my brains and my backbone, and a sure way of burying myself like a gopher and watching my chance to escape from the town. But in the meantime I am not doing what I came here to



do, and I am going out like a criminal instead of as an honest man should."

The young man spoke bitterly.

It was evident that he was cut by the speech of Gentleman Joe, and that there was a sense of friendlessness upon him which made everything look black.

Foxy Fan stood with her back against the wall watching the young man keenly, with just a suspicion of a smile upon her lips.

The expression upon her face was a peculiar one.

It was as if she knew of something about which she would like to speak, although she was determined to keep silent.

"I haven't said that I wouldn't help you," replied Gentry.

"And I haven't said that I wanted you to. I just asked your advice. And as I just declared, you needn't give me that. Perhaps you had better not, and then you won't have anything to answer for if I should get into a tight pinch. You don't know but I did have something to do with the killing of Hime Henderson. God knows I hate him bad enough!"

"There you go with that tongue of yours! Let me say right here that I have a good mind to turn you over to the tender mercies of the law and let you see what kind of a case you can make out for yourself in court unless you promise to keep that tongue of yours a little more steady. If your neck gets into a noose, it will be you that puts it there, you may be sure of that."

The young man bit his lips as if something rose to them which would have sounded worse than anything he had said yet.

"I suppose I'll have to find a chance to sneak out of town," he said, at last, sitting with his face buried in his hands.

"It may come to that, and it's likely that that will be the very best thing for you to do. About all I can do is to fasten the crime on the right one. I haven't had time to think of it very much. But I happen to know that there's one person who is capable of taking the life of another in



an underhanded way right here in town, and he isn't far off."

"What do you mean by that?" Kid-Glove Kit asked, looking up quickly.

"An attempt was just made on my life."

"On your life, Mr. Gentry?"

"On my life."

"How was that?"

Gentleman Joe briefly related the incident of the falling box from the topmost window of the hotel where the crime had been committed.

"I have looked the house over, questioned every one nearly connected with it, and have found out just one fact, and that is a negative one," said Gentleman Joe.

"What was that?"

"That nobody in the hotel made that cowardly attempt upon me. It was done by somebody who sneaked in, and most likely they have sneaked out again, though I can't be sure of that. I have searched the house as thoroughly as possible, and have set several to watch, so that if anybody not belonging there goes in or out, they will be spotted and reported to me. That's all I could do up to this time."

The young man leaped to his feet and his face brightened.

"Then, there's some hope for me!" he exclaimed.

"Of course there's hope for you, unless you are guilty. And if you're guilty, my boy, remember that I shall find it out. I wouldn't have suspected you for a minute if you hadn't let your tongue run wild, and that last speech of yours troubles me more than anything else. I am your friend, and as your friend I'm going to watch you!"

Again Chris Kimball's face would have been seen to grow pale but for the grime upon it.

Yet his eyes did not fall, nor did he show other signs of shrinking.

"Watch me, then!" he cried, defiantly.

"I don't think you have anything to fear from my watching. I am simply in this case up to my neck, and I have got to find out the guilty one as a matter of protection to the innocent, if nothing more."



"It might be, Mr. Gentry, that I was the one who tried to throw that box down onto your head," said the young man, still in that bitter tone.

"I don't think it, and I know better. Don't get cranky, youngster, for you'll find that I'm the best friend you've got, and that if you don't have to swing for this affair it will be my interference that saved you. You have nerve enough, but you are too hot-headed to take care of yourself."

"I never have been afraid of my own shadow yet, and it's hard to pretend that I was friendly toward the man just because he was murdered and his murderer hasn't been found. I can't pretend to be sorry that Hime Henderson got——"

"Hold up, youngster!"

Like a bullet from a gun came these words from the lips of Gentleman Joe, and they were emphasized by the ominous click of a weapon which he had hastily drawn, the muzzle of which looked straight into the eyes of Christopher Kimball!

The latter recoiled, sank back into his chair, and a dejected look came into his face.

"I have a good mind to say what I started to and let you shoot," he muttered.

"Go ahead, then—and every man in Leadville will uphold me in what I do," was the retort of Gentleman Joe, spoken in a voice which had the ring of steel.

The young man compressed his lips and was silent.

Gentleman Joe put up his weapon and said:

"You are bound to make things as hard for yourself as you can, and I suppose the only way to get any sense into your head is to knock it in. But I'll give you the advice and you may use it or not. How much of a space is there under this floor that you just jumped out of?"

"It was a tolerably tight fit for me, but I got in and out again, and I suppose I could repeat the operation."

"It is some hours before daybreak, and you'll find it a little too warm for you to get out of town easily before another night. So if Foxy Fan will help shield you here until then it will be the best thing you can do. Then I'll



manage to get a good horse for you and have it at a convenient place, and if you can get there and have the nerve to take a long, hard ride alone, I advise you to do it, and you had better keep out of the towns and cities until you hear from me. I'll see you again before you go and appoint a place where I can get word to you. For inside of three days I am going to know who killed Himo Henderson."

"And I suppose you will want to see him pay the penalty of it," returned the young man.

"Sure."

"While if I had my way about it," Chris Kimball continued, "I would like to see him escape. He has done a good thing, and it's a pity to wipe out the man who had the nerve to do it."

"Even if the same one would have made an end of me in the same cowardly fashion?" Gentleman Joe asked.

"No, I don't mean that. Maybe I don't mean anything I say. I am too much broken up to know what I say or do. I guess the best thing you can do is to tie me hand and foot and chuck me into that hole and nail down the board and keep me there until I cool off or until you find the murderer."

As these words passed the young man's lips Foxy Fan sprang forward and laid her hand upon his arm.

"Down into the hole—quick! There are some men knocking at my door, and I am afraid that they smell a rat."

Instantly the fugitive dropped down through the opening, and Gentleman Joe pushed the loose board into place, while Foxy Fan hastened out into her faro-parlor.

## CHAPTER VIII.

"DID YOU DO IT?"

Foxy Fan never lacked presence of mind, and the present condition was no exception to the rule.

The hour was already past midnight.

There was no light in her faro-parlor, and only a dim one in the inner room, which did not show at all in the outer one except as the door was opened between.

The only way in which it could be told that there was



a light in the building at all was from the rear through a window into the room into which the inside window opened from the little central apartment where Kid-Glove Kit was concealed.

From that side the light could have been seen dimly gleaming, though it was perfectly sure that no object within the room could have been seen from the outside, no matter how close a watch might have been kept.

This assurance lent Foxy Fan a confidence which she might not otherwise have felt.

She did not hurry directly to the door, but waited for the knock to be repeated several times, each time more loudly, than the first.

At last her little boot-heels tapped sharply across the floor of her faro-parlor, and her clear, authoritative voice exclaimed:

"My parlor is closed for the night, gentlemen, and it won't be opened till eight o'clock in the morning, not if you wear your knuckles out a-thumping!"

There was an instant's silence succeeding this remark, and then a gruff voice said:

"We don't want anything of your bank, my girl, but we do want the young galoot that's in there hiding!"

"If I had a young galoot in here I would fire him out at you with pleasure," was the ready response of Foxy Fan, without the faintest show of uneasiness. "But as I don't keep any galoots on hand, and have just sold out my stock, you might as well tramp on to the next ranch, gentlemen."

Another brief interval of silence succeeded this speech.

Foxy Fan had not been in Leadville long enough to have become very well known.

Although her place had a good run of business, everything had gone so quietly that she had not had to assert herself as the proprietor of such a place sometimes has to do.

She had been simply observed as a very pretty young woman who seemed to know her business, and who very quietly rebuffed all attempts at familiarity on the part of her customers.



"You needn't try any bluff," came back, at last, in the same gruff voice.

"To which remark, gentlemen, I will say ditto. I am ready to oblige and all that, but I never open my parlor after hours, and I don't reckon that anybody else is going to open it for me unless they do it with a crowbar."

"We don't want any part of your faro, my girl. We'll put it plain what we do want, and that's the chap that murdered Hime Henderson."

"I am willing you should have him wherever you can find him, for certainly I have no use for him."

"Kid-Glove Kit is the man, and you know it, miss."

"He may be, and may not, but I don't know it, and I don't believe you do."

"And Kid-Glove Kit is hiding in your shanty—he was seen to go in there half an hour ago."

"That shows, gentlemen, that you are clear off your reckoning. I won't deny that somebody came in with me half an hour ago—but it wasn't Kid-Glove Kit and it doesn't look much like him either. He's an old friend of mine, and if it's he you want to see I reckon you can interview him. You'll find that he can talk most as good as I can, and shoot better, if it comes to that."

Raising her voice, Foxy Fan called out:

"These gentlemen want to see you, Mr. Gentry."

In another moment Gentleman Joe was at the door, and without hesitation he flung it open and confronted the four men who stood outside in the darkness.

He had seen none of them before except as he might have met them by chance in the streets or in some of the resorts of Leadville.

"Well, gentlemen, it's your say, so what's the word?" was the salutation from Gentleman Joe, in a voice which was as careless and cool as it might have been under any imaginable conditions.

"Why, it's Joseph Gentry, of Denver!" exclaimed one

"But now of Leadville," was Gentry's retort.

"But he isn't the one we wanted to see," said the one who had spoken first.

"You are under no obligations to look at him. And if you feel much disappointment all you have got to do is to



move on to the next ranch or until you find something more pleasing to your gaze."

"We aren't after any bluff, Mr. Gentry. We are just plain men, and we says plain things. We reckon that Kid-Glove Kit, the murderer of Hime Henderson, is hiding in this ere ranch, and we want to pull him out. We reckon that you're a particular friend of Mr. Kimball, and that makes us all the more sure that he is hiding here. We don't want any trouble, and we don't mean to have none. We think you know when it's foolish to stand out, and when it's sensible."

"If you're looking for the murderer of Hime Henderson, you are looking in the wrong place for him," said Gentleman Joe.

"That's your opinion—our'n is different. After we have looked here till we are satisfied, we'll look elsewhere, as you say. But we are not going away till we've seen the inside of this ranch."

"You have seen as much of the inside as you will see to-night by consent of mine. If the proprietor is willing to admit you, I have nothing to say. But I believe she refused you, and from what I know of her she is not the one to go back on her refusal."

"It will take more than a man and a woman, and both of them sports, to scare this bit of a crowd. We are just plain men, and we says what we means and does what we says. Now, Mr. Gentry, watch us come in!"

The speaker held up one hand in a way which was evidently intended as a signal.

At the same time he put his foot upon the threshold and stepped across it.

Gentleman Joe drew back a single pace and stood waiting as if to see how far they would carry their bluff.

The spokesman of the four was a big, burly fellow of medium height and weight, and when he pushed his way into the room through the door-way it was with a sort of force that it would not seem easy to resist.

Gentleman Joe for an instant did not seem inclined to make any resistance.

He even allowed the man to fairly enter the room, while



the others, a little more hesitating in their movements, approached the door as if to see how things were going.

Foxy Fan had withdrawn to the rear of the room, but she suddenly sprang forward and exclaimed:

"Are you going to let them in, Gentleman Joe? I have said no, and I depended upon you to back up my word. If you haven't the backbone to do it——"

"I reckon there's nothing the matter with my backbone," Gentleman Joe said, in a low voice.

With lightning quickness, he projected himself forward, caught the burly intruder by the hips in a powerful grasp, lifted him from his feet, and with a tremendous effort, flung him headlong out through the open door and into the very midst of his comrades!

The other three men, standing close together, were struck fairly by the human projectile and swept like nine-pins off the step.

"A man's house is his castle, and so is a woman's!" said Gentleman Joe, his voice ringing loud and clear above the muttered ejaculations which were bursting from the lips of the Leadville roughs.

The one who had been hurled out was the last to get upon his feet.

The others scrambled up one by one, and as they faced about, expecting to find the door closed, they found instead that Gentleman Joe was still standing in the door-way, with a cocked revolver in each hand.

"Now, gentlemen, is your opportunity to amble! When the proprietor of this ranch says no admittance, you don't want to try too hard to be admittel, because the trial won't pan out worth a penny!"

All four men were upon their feet again, and the rumble of their angry voices filled the air.

There was a momentary movement toward making a second attempt to enter the house.

But the leader, who had received already such a substantial evidence of Gentleman Joe's ability to back up his word, quickly said:

"No use, boys; the sport from Denver holds all the trumps, and he has the name of knowing how to play them."



"And are we going to back down, the four of us for one?" asked one of the men.

"It wouldn't be backing down, gentlemen, it would simply be doing the thing that you ought to have had sense enough to do in the first place," interposed Gentleman Joe, in the same quiet tone which he had used all along. "It isn't my fault or this lady's that you didn't know enough to mind a straight order. You don't suppose that she could let the roughs of Leadville run her place for her, do you? And you don't suppose that I, as a gentleman, could stand by and see them try to do it? So use your senses, men, and call again in the morning, when you will find the doors open and the little lady ready to take your ante."

"What's needed is a bigger crowd," said one who had not spoken before.

"That's just the need," coincided another.

With their voices still rumbling in angry protest, the quartet of men moved away, turning their backs on the place of the Faro Sharp.

Gentleman Joe waited for them to disappear before he closed the door and once more faced the Faro Sharp.

The eyes of the latter were shining brightly, and there was the old flush of admiration in her cheeks.

"You made them amble, didn't you, Gentleman Joe? And in the good old way, too. I reckon they have learned something to-night, and learned it well."

"But the trouble isn't over," said Gentleman Joe, gravely.

"Trouble never is, at least it never has been in my life. All we can do is to put down the little things and brace ourselves to fight the big ones."

"But they are bound to search your place, and they will be back inside of an hour with a crowd big enough to tear down your shanty. Of course, we might barricade ourselves here and make a foolish kind of a fight, and if we had nerve enough we might even win in the end. But it would not be to our credit, and it might not help Kid-Glove Kit any. And then, my girl, the worst of it is that I am not sure that he is worthy of it."



Foxy Fan seemed about to speak, then suddenly compressed her lips as if to shut back the words.

"Why don't you say it, my girl?" he asked.

"Because I thought I had better not."

"So you haven't told me all you know about this fellow?"

"I didn't know very much about him till to-night."

"But you have learned a good deal about him to-night, or he wouldn't have come here to hide. How did he know but that you would give him away?"

"Because I told him I wouldn't."

"Where did you see him first?"

"Right here. He hid himself down among those rocks. I saw him crawling out, and I signaled to him in a way that he knew was friendly. So he made bold to approach, and I told him that I would try and cover his tracks until I could see you."

"Then you thought he was innocent?"

"I didn't know, and I didn't care. I like to see a fellow have fair play, and he wouldn't have got it if those men had caught him to-night. I reckon he hates Hime Henderson bad enough, and that he stood a pretty good chance of doing what was done. But he didn't do it unless I make a big mistake."

"Then you have had some talk with him about it?"

"But little."

"Why are you so reserved, my girl? Why shouldn't you trust me, as you have done in the past? Haven't I given you evidence enough that I want to see the fellow have fair play, and that I am willing to make a fight to that end if necessary. Answer me that, my girl."

"You have given evidence that you are just the same dear old Gentleman Joe that you always were. Square on your feet, with your nerves cool and your heart in the right place! And in another way, you are like the old Gentleman Joe, and that is that you are as full of curiosity as a nut is full of meat. You can no more keep from asking questions than you can keep from eating when you're hungry."

"Or than you can keep from being saucy," smiled Gentleman Joe.



"That was a square hit and a true one. So there's no need for us to quarrel since we seem to agree on every point."

"If you know anything about this young man, you can't do any better than to let out the whole truth."

"How do you know that I couldn't do any better? Don't you reckon that I have some sense in my brain-pan as well as you? Can't you give me the credit of having a little discretion? How do you know but I would do the very best thing to be done without any of your help?"

"I suppose I ought to trust you more. But when I am looking into a case like this it strikes me that there isn't any danger of knowing too much of the truth. So let me put it straight. I must know all you know about that young man and his connection with the affair, or out he comes from yonder room, and by my hand! And he will have a chance to face his accusers to-night and give a pretty good reason why he shouldn't take what they have to give him."

The voice of Gentleman Joe did not change in the least as he uttered these words.

The color, however, instantly faded from the cheeks of Foxy Fan, and there was a gleam of anger in her eyes.

"That's a threat!" she exclaimed.

"Take it as you please. It is not long since I first met you here at Leadville, and all the time you have been determined to show the crooked side of your nature. When you act like yourself I shall feel as if I could trust you. But I can't help feeling that there's something wrong and that I must deal with you as I would with any stranger."

Foxy Fan was breathing hard and quick.

"Do you know whose premises you are on?" she exclaimed, in a voice which quivered.

"I am upon yours."

"And didn't you come in here by my consent and invitation?"

"Yes."

"Then have you any right to take advantage of the situation? And would you be the gentleman that you have



always borne the name of being, if you were to stay here now if I were to tell you to go?"

"Gentleman Joe smiled faintly as he answered:

"I suppose not. And I suppose I see what you are driving at. You are going to order me out of your place."

"You have guessed it, Mr. Gentry. I am going to order you off my premises—I do order you to go! Aren't you going?"

Gentleman Joe was still smiling, and he hesitated.

He had a vague feeling that this girl had got the best of the argument. He also felt that perhaps he had been a little too hasty in the threat which he had made.

And when he realized that he had made a mistake no man living was more ready to acknowledge it than Joseph Gentry.

"You have the right to tell me to go, and since you do so, I shall obey."

"And you won't return until I invite you. Remember that you just said that a woman's house is her castle. This is mine, and for the present I want you to keep out of it!"

Gentleman Joe bowed, and his lips moved as if he would speak.

But he repressed the words, and silently opened the door and went out upon the street.

Foxy Fan closed the door after him, but waited until the sound of his footsteps had died away before she went into the inner room, under the floor of which the fugitive was concealed.

She quickly lifted the board and said:

"Come out, quick! It isn't safe for you to stay here!"

Chris Kimball climbed forth from his hiding-place and came out with no great show of haste.

He looked dejected and almost indifferent. He had been pressed so hard that he had almost lost courage and inclination to keep up the fight.

Foxy Fan faced him, her eyes shining and the color back in her cheeks.

"I wouldn't tell him what I knew, Kid-Glove Kit," she said.



"You wouldn't tell him what you knew! What do you mean?"

"I mean that you didn't tell me all the truth."

"How do you know that?"

"Because somebody told me. I have been in Leadville long enough to get the confidence of one person, and now I am going to ask you to tell me truly whether you killed Hime Henderson or not? Remember that if you did and say you did, that the fact will never pass my lips after it goes in at my ears. You must tell me the truth for I know a part of it already!"

The young man looked at her sharply, and his hand as he raised it was seen to tremble.

"What do you know?" he demanded.

"I know that you went into Jared Joyce's room not five minutes before Hime Henderson was killed, and that you didn't come out of it until after the crime was committed! That's what I know, Kid-Glove Kit, and I know it straight! What have you to say to it?"

The young man sank back upon the chair where he had been sitting as if he were weak and faint.

"You know too much," he mumbled.

"I know just what I have told you, and now I want you to tell me the rest of it. The chain of evidence is complete if I choose to tell it. You were in that room when Hime Henderson was killed, and you wanted him to die! Now, straight now, did you do it?"

---

## CHAPTER IX.

### PARSON JIM'S LITTLE PLAY.

Just fourteen miles out of Leadville, on a lonely summit overlooking a dismal gorge, stood Kid-Glove Kit.

He was alone.

Dressed in a suit of buckskin trimmed fancifully, Indian fashion, he hardly looked like the same young man who had come to Leadville in such immaculate attire that he had won the appellation by which he was commonly known.

He had reached this spot without the aid of a horse.

Indeed, although Gentleman Joe had proffered him so much assistance on the condition of his accepting it and



giving his confidence in return he had taken the advice of Foxy Fan and fled on foot instead.

Unused as he was to hard exercise in these altitudes, he had made such progress that it was now only two hours after dawn on the morning succeeding his flight and the crime at Leadville.

From the height where he stood he had an excellent view of the way over which he had come.

If there had been any pursuers within four or five miles he could easily have distinguished them from that point.

But not a living being was in sight.

"I believe a man must be safe in such solitudes as these," he exclaimed, with a sigh of relief.

Even as he spoke, however, he was startled by the sound of a fragment of rock falling down into the gorge.

A glance in the direction from which the sound came showed him a man stepping from one rocky projection to another, clambering up the side of the gorge, and seemingly unconscious of the young man's presence.

A revolver showed in the hand of the latter, and its aim covered the stranger.

Kit was not inexperienced in the use of such a weapon, and at such a range he would be morally certain of dropping his man if he chose to do so.

His finger touched the trigger, pressed it slightly, and then he relented.

For in that moment he saw that the man clambering up the gorge was not one of his pursuers.

The next instant the stranger had reached the summit and uttered an ejaculation of dismay at finding himself confronted by Kid-Glove Kit, and covered by a weapon.

"Christopher Kimball!"

"Parson Jim!"

The last name had slipped from the lips of the fugitive—or to be more exact, from the lips of Kit Kimball, since one was as much a fugitive as the other.

Parson Jim, slight in figure, pale-faced, and clad in a suit of black, did not have an unclerical look.

His eyes were deep-set, and his countenance looked like that of a student.



His lips were thin and sensitively curved, and his face bore many lines of refinement.

His hands were rather small and white, and it was plain that he was not used to toil.

Parson Jim was a man of thirty-five. Although he was at first presented to the reader under conditions which would seem somewhat humiliating to himself, yet a casual glance at his countenance would show that he was a man of no ordinary character.

Physically, he certainly carried an air of inferiority.

In leaping, running, or in a hand-to-hand tussle, he was sure to make a poor show.

Yet there are some men with flabby muscles who show themselves on occasions able to do great things with their brains.

Whether or not this was the case with Parson Jim, it is in part the theme of our tale to make clear.

Stepping lightly from rock to rock he approached yet closer to Kid-Glove Kit.

The latter had lowered his weapon, for it was clear that for the present he would have no need of it.

Standing thus face to face the two men looked into each other's eyes a full minute in silence.

"Well," said Kid-Glove Kit, "I wonder how it happens that we meet here?"

"I was wondering about the same thing. I always took it that you were a tenderfoot in these parts, and I didn't think you would wander so far away from Leadville, certainly not alone."

As Parson Jim uttered this speech he cast a hurried glance about as if the thought had come to him that Kid-Glove Kit might have companions.

"I don't hardly know how I came to do it myself."

"Then you are alone?"

"Yes. Or at least I was until I met you."

"So am I. I'll say it as a matter of confidence since we seem to have been thrown together. And now that I look at you I wonder if there wasn't a similar reason for your getting out of Leadville to that which sent me up here in the wilds alone?"



Parson Jim's deep-set eyes were fixed keenly upon the face of the other.

It seemed to Kid-Glove Kit as if it were an attempt to read his thoughts—and it almost seemed to him as if the attempt was successful.

"You mean to ask me if I have skipped the town for the town's good?"

"I wouldn't put it that way. I had rather ask you if you had skipped the town for your own safety? It's my way to put my thoughts in smoother language than some, and that's the reason I suppose that they call me Parson Jim."

"To answer your question I will say that I am out of Leadville for my own safety, and from the fact of your asking me I should say that you had heard what happened there last night."

"My little difficulty occurred early in the evening. I suppose you know about it. There's a young woman who has struck the town that thinks she knows something against my record. I won't say whether she does or not, but she has got enough of the men of the town to think so to get me into a bit of a pinch. Somebody else interfered, and I made the most of my chance to escape."

"You say this happened early in the evening?"

"Yes, it happened early in the evening."

"And you came directly in this direction?"

"After fairly leaving the town I came in this direction. But neither so very swift nor so very straight, for I wanted to feel my way, as it were, and I didn't care to get a great ways from Leadville unless pushed to it."

"Then you have an idea of going back?"

"I have an idea of going back when the coast is clear. What I really fear is the young woman I spoke about. We are old enemies, or rather she's an old enemy of mine, for I don't like to hold grudges against any one."

Kid-Glove Kit was looking keenly into the face of Parson Jim all the while these remarks were being exchanged.

That Parson Jim had a gift for smooth speaking was evident.

Whether his smoothness of speech and plausibility of manner covered a nature capable of dangerous duplicity or



not, Christopher Kimball found it hard to decide even in his own mind.

"I didn't leave town until after midnight," said Kid-Glove Kit.

"Then it appears that we are both fugitives, and by a strange chance fled in the same direction and have come together at the same point. I wonder if you are aiming at any particular point in this vicinity?"

"I couldn't very well do that since I was never here before. I came here on as near a bee-line as I could strike from the town with the purpose of getting as far away from Leadville as I could, and at the same time keep on a course where I could see the back trail and know at all times if I was pursued."

"I understand. And it so happens that you could not have chosen a better direction. I am more fortunate than you in having had long experience in these mountains. It also happens that I came here with a definite purpose."

Parson Jim was silent for a moment, and while he was speaking his eyes met those of Kid-Glove Kit.

It seemed as if Parson Jim was turning over in his mind their mutual situation and was deliberately forming a plan of procedure.

"As I was saying," Parson Jim resumed, "I have a rendezvous in this vicinity where I believe we may conceal ourselves with a fair degree of safety. And I am willing to give you the same liberty in using it that I exercise myself."

Parson Jim spoke very deliberately, as if he was making up his mind all the time that he was speaking.

"You haven't asked me the reason why I fled from Leadville. Yet you are kind enough to take me into your quarters for safety," said Kid-Glove Kit.

"It may be that I am not so kind as you think."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that I may have a selfish motive in it. It's none too pleasant business burying one's self in such solitudes as these without human companions. I imagine that you and I would be congenial companions if we were thrown together long enough."



Parson Jim said this in a tone which impressed Kid-Glove Kit yet more deeply.

The latter felt strangely drawn toward the speaker before.

Never before, upon such short acquaintance, had he met a man who had impressed him so deeply and so favorably.

In Leadville Kid-Glove Kit had met Parson Jim several times, and they had exchanged the compliments of the day, and nothing more.

There was something in the personality of Parson Jim that exercised a species of fascination over most of those with whom he came in contact. This was especially so in the case of Kid-Glove Kit.

"If you have as much confidence in me as this, Parson Jim, I surely ought to reciprocate," said Kid-Glove Kit.

"I don't ask that. I assume that you have fled from Leadville for a good and sufficient reason. I wish to make no secret for the reason of my flight. The young woman named Foxy Fan is an old foe of mine——"

"Foxy Fan!" ejaculated Kid-Glove Kit.

Parson Jim smiled faintly, and said:

"I take it that she is a friend of yours. And so it goes—what's meat for one is poison for another. We had our little difficulty more than a year ago, and I would have been glad to have healed up the breach if I only might have done so. She is a strong friend and a bitter enemy, and she's a brave young woman. Unfortunately, her prejudice against me was so strong that she would make Leadville too hot to hold me, and I decided to get outside and bide my time. She never stays long in a place—she's what might be called a bird of passage. It may be that I can return to the town as soon as the business I have in hand there requires my presence."

Parson Jim spoke in a smooth, easy manner, and without the slightest hesitation.

His language was entirely unlike that used by the men to be met with in that locality.

Yet he seemed to be thoroughly at home in the mountain wilds and with the rougher element in which he found himself in Leadville.



"Surely," thought Kid-Glove Kit, "this man is an extraordinary one, and it may be that Foxy Fan was unduly prejudiced against him."

"There's no reason why you and I should be foes because one who has proved a friend to me is an enemy to you," said Christopher Kimball.

"I am glad that you feel in that way about it. And now that that matter is off your mind and mine, let us repair to safer quarters, for I feel that it isn't safe for you to stay here. I have the impression that your real danger is greater than mine, since I feel that you have the influence of many to fear, while I have that of only one."

"I don't really understand why you think so," said Kit.

"I'll make myself plain when I have a chance or when the right time comes. But now follow me."

As he spoke these words Parson Jim started out at an easy swinging pace along the brink of the gorge until a spot was reached where they might easily descend to the bottom of the gully if they chose to do so.

They did descend half way until they reached a narrow rocky ledge which ran along the wall of the declivity like a prolonged shelf.

This was barely wide enough for them to walk single file, and it extended to a distance of several hundred feet with a uniform width.

Suddenly they reached a spot where the shelf of rock seemed abruptly to terminate.

From that point to the bottom of the gully was an abrupt descent of almost forty feet, while they were thirty feet below the summit of the wall.

Parson Jim led the way, and at no time had he appeared in the least disturbed at the narrowness of the space upon which they were obliged to walk or of the depths below.

Yet a misstep meant certain death.

Kid-Glove Kit was wholly unused to adventures of this sort. Yet he profited by the other's example, and maintained a semblance of indifference.

"It would seem to you that we had about reached the jumping-off place," remarked Parson Jim, smilingly.

"It looks like that."

"And so we have, and we'll proceed to jump off. Wait-



ing for the reappearance of Mr. Edwards, all the while that the interview between the latter and Gentleman Joe was taking place.

Innocent soul that she was, she felt that in bringing these two men together she had done a service to both.

She saw the great door open, and her eyes were fixed eagerly upon it to see the man whom she believed to be such a model of conduct come forth.

And she saw him come!

She saw Edwards scramble to his feet in anything but a dignified manner. Then she saw him whip a revolver from his pocket and wheel about toward the door of the jail, but too late to get a glimpse of his assailant had he wished to fire on him.

The guard, in obedience to Gentry's orders, had closed and locked the door.

Mollie Elliot had never been so puzzled in her life.

What had caused Edwards to plunge forth from the jail in that fashion was more than she could conceive.

Not for an instant did she suspect that he had been thrown out by the prisoner himself.

That the meeting between Gentleman Joe and Mr. Edwards could have resulted in anything but friendliness was wholly beyond her conception.

She saw Edwards approach the entrance of his hotel and disappear within it.

She was about to enter herself, when she heard a low, feminine laugh, and turning round she saw Foxy Fan standing close behind her.

"I reckon your boss took a tumble, didn't he?" asked the Faro Sharp, her eyes twinkling as they met those of the girl.

"What does it mean?" Mollie returned.

"Didn't you stand where you could see all of it?"

"I only saw Mr. Edwards come stumbling forth from the jail."

"Well, he didn't do it alone. He had plenty of help, you may be sure of that."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that Joseph Gentry, of Denver, has a great gift for helping people along in the world in many different



ways. I reckon that your Edwards and the Denver sport didn't get along well together, and that Gentleman Joe pitched him out, and he did it in pretty good shape, too, don't you think so?"

"Do you mean that Mr. Gentry flung Mr. Edwards out of the jail?"

"It rather looks that way, Miss Mollie. But don't feel bad—it's something that will never happen the other way. Your Edwards will never toss Joseph Gentry, of Denver, round in that way, make sure of that. And you may make sure of another thing, and that is that Gentleman Joe had a good reason for doing it or he never would have done it at all. But what about your call? You were going to report to me."

Mollie was too dazed by what had happened to speak for a moment.

When she had collected her scattered senses she briefly repeated what had passed between herself and Gentleman Joe.

"Well, my little girl, you have done the best you could, and you haven't done very bad, either. But I could have told you that your Edwards and Joseph Gentry wouldn't hitch horses in any kind of a trade. Gentleman Joe never likes to deal with any one that wears a mask all the time. He likes an open face and open talk, and he is as open as the sun every day in the week, Mollie. I wouldn't tell you this unless I knew it to be true."

The cheeks of Foxy Fan were flushed warmly as she spoke thus, and her eyes were shining.

There was something in her expression which deeply impressed the true-hearted girl to whom she was speaking.

Mollie drew closer to her and laid one arm lightly on her shoulder, while with a sudden show of affection which the Faro Sharp had almost never been seen to display before, she threw one arm around the slender girl and held her close.

There was not a word spoken for a moment, but in that silent embrace there seemed to be a mutual understanding between the two.

From that moment they were friends in a higher sense



of the word than that in which it is generally understood.

Twenty minutes later they were in a private apartment in the dwelling occupied by Foxy Fan.

There, with the door locked and the shades drawn so that no prying eyes could look in upon them, the two girls sat face to face in silence for some moments.

"I suppose we might as well face the grim truth," said Foxy Fan, at last.

"I suppose so. I have faced some hard things, though I am so young," said Mollie.

"I won't discourage you by saying that you have just started out, for maybe you will strike a better streak of luck than I did. You have started out to be a good girl, while I didn't, and that makes a big difference. Good or bad, some hard things come to us, but the hardest ones come to them that don't live quite straight. But don't think by that, Miss Mollie, that I'm very bad, except that I have helped quite a number of men to get rid of their surplus cash at faro; but perhaps I have helped more to get back their cash or saved them from losing it in the same foolish way by my good advice. But when I was young I was headstrong and willful, bound to scoop in the money, no matter who might be the loser. I did enter into one or two conspiracies against men who were honest and straight, and I'll tell you, Mollie, that Joseph Gentry, of Denver, was one of the men I started out to hate and to level.

"He was so good looking and princely in his ways, and he came into a town where a brother of mine and I were starting out to run the town our own way. He went against us, and he did it so strong that we hated him from the first. But I didn't hate him very long.

"He showed me what kind of a man he really was, and I started out to turn over a new leaf. I did turn over one, but I ought to have turned over another. Since then I have met him, and we have been together many times. I have seen him triumph over enemy after enemy, and I have seen him in many tight places, and I know that he can get out of them without any help.



"But I have seen him once or twice in places where his record would have been wound up for him if I hadn't taken a hand in the game. A man may be ever so bold and ever so brave, but when he is walking 'round among traps he is pretty sure to get his foot in one of them sooner or later. If he happen to have more enemies than friends, or his enemies happen to be sharper than his friends, that's the time when he will lose his ante. And, Mollie, he is in just such a box this precious minute. And let me tell you, unless the right thing is done at the right time, our Joseph Gentry will have to shuffle off. And now, Mollie, can we, a pair of loving and silly women, do anything for these two men who are in such dire danger?"

"I have the courage, but I don't know what to do."

"You don't know what to do about Kid-Glove Kit, but I'm sure that you can advise concerning Joseph Gentry. On the other hand, I can help you help Kid-Glove Kit while I'm all at sea about doing for Gentleman Joe. Too much anxiety hampers instead of helps, don't you think so?"

"Yes, I think so. And I believe that we can help each other in that way. But you are so much older than I, and have had so much experience in this wild region that I feel as if all the advice ought to come from you."

"And yet with all my experience, and I have plenty of nerve, too, I am weak as a child in the present emergency. I feel that Gentleman Joe is in the tightest pinch of his life. Yet I feel almost certain that you can help him both by your suggestions and your action. Now let's talk the matter over and see what can be done for him."

For more than two hours the two young women sat thus, talking low and earnestly.

Their mutual confidences quickened their wits. Mollie, young though she was, proved herself to be possessed of all a woman's wit.

When at the end of the interview a plan of action had been laid out, it could be said that Mollie Elliot had contributed her share to the scheme.

If Gentleman Joe was to regain his liberty by their plan, he would owe his liberty quite as much to the suggestion



offered by Mollie Elliot as Kid-Glove Kit would owe his success to the genius of Foxy Fan.

The fact was that Gentleman Joe did not realize the seriousness of his condition.

He believed that the shooting which he had done in the cabin of Kid-Glove Kit had been witnessed simply by an inquisitive citizen of the town, and that he had reported it and thus started a suspicion when it might well have been done under such conditions.

But he did not dream that there was a conspiracy, at least not at this stage of affairs.

He felt certain that in the end his own reputation would be sufficient to direct the investigation in another quarter, and that he would soon be released from an absurd suspicion.

He merely thought his situation an awkward one, but not one of actual danger.

Yet at the very time when Foxy Fan and Mollie Elliot were discussing plans for helping Gentleman Joe and Christopher Kimball, there was a secret meeting being held in one of the rooms in the hotel of which Edwards was the proprietor.

Edwards himself was not present at the meeting.

Yet there were a few there who knew that he had been active in calling the meeting, and that he had pledged it his support and help in any substantial way needed.

There was a class of quite substantial citizens in the new town, but there was also a rougher element represented by wandering men who visited every new mining camp and town, and remained there until they were crowded out by a more worthy class of men.

At this time the number of this class was unusually large in Leadville.

This meeting of the rougher element in Leadville called together fully thirty men in all.

Indeed, the room in which they met was of such small dimensions that they had to stand as close together as sardines packed in a box.

Hardly a word was spoken until one of the members of the gathering sprang upon a small table, which was the



only furniture which was allowed to remain in the room, and addressed them.

The speaker's language was rough and crude, as were the gestures with which he emphasized the remarks.

A few oaths and hard names were sprinkled in, probably with the intention of making his plea stronger.

The speech was of the most fervid type, and full of maledictions against one person. And yet the name of that one was not once uttered.

He was merely spoken of as "a certain galoot shut up in a certain strong room in the blooming municipality of Leadville."

Yet every man in the crowd understood who was meant.

After this speech everything else that was said was spoken in lower tones and informally.

The one who had spoken to them seemed to have a definite scheme to present, but he did not present it to them as he had done at the start, but told each one individually and in a semi-confidential manner.

The approval with which it was greeted and the general good feeling with which this individual was received, taken with the cruel, fierce purpose against Gentleman Joe, showed that the Gilt-Edged Sport was indeed in the greatest danger of his life.

Indeed, if they were to allow him fair play, there was not the shadow of a chance that a case would be made out against him.

This secret meeting was held with the express purpose of preventing anything like fair play.

It was the desire to work up the passion of the wild men of the town, and, in his case, to let that take the place of law and justice.

No matter if too late it was found that a great mistake had been made.

After having accomplished the purpose it would indeed be difficult to punish the concourse of ruffians who had done their bidding.

"Not a word outside, you know, gentlemen," said the leader, as the meeting broke up.

"Not a word outside," passed from lip to lip.

Again came another injunction from their leader.



"Remember, to-night."

"Remember, to-night" was taken up and repeated in the same impressive manner.

Then came the final order from the leader.

"At eleven-thirty o'clock."

"At eleven-thirty o'clock" was taken up as at first, and passed from lip to lip.

This was the end of the secret conference, and in a little while the men left the building, one at a time, in such a way as not to attract much attention.

There was certainly not a suspicion among the better class of citizens in the town that there was a plot against the gentlemanly prisoner in the Leadville jail.

In reality it was a plot which if carried out would result in nothing less than the death of Joseph Gentry, of Denver, only the crime would be committed in the name of justice, and the sentence pronounced by Judge Lynch.

Very little attention did this meeting attract outside except among those who were in the secret.

But one there was who had seen the men depart and had overheard a part of their plot.

That one, with a pretty face and innocent airs, met many of the men face to face, and obtained from none of them more than a passing glance.

And even the glance was bestowed on her because of her beauty rather than on account of any suspicion.

When the most of the men had departed, Mollie Elliot, who, as we have hinted, had overheard much of the plot against Gentleman Joe, quietly left the hotel and was making her way toward the dwelling of Foxy Fan.

Suddenly she was brought to a halt by a hand laid lightly on her shoulder.

Facing about, she found herself confronted by her employer.

"You seem to be leaving your work at rather an early hour," he said, fixing his eyes on her in a way that made her shiver.

"I was going to speak to a friend."

"To the girl-gambler, hey?"

"To the one they call Foxy Fan."

"And, pray, what may you have in common with that



young woman? Do you think she is a fit companion for a young girl like you?"

"I suppose I have a right to choose my own friends."

"But suppose I should say that I would not employ a young lady who kept such company?"

"I suppose I should have the right to say that you could do as you liked. I guess I will say that anyway, Mr. Edwards."

The latter looked surprised.

He had an idea that this girl was as simple and submissive as she was pretty.

He now realized that there was more spirit in her make-up than he had imagined.

"I am not through with you yet, miss. When I am, I'll say so. There's work for you to do, so go back and do it."

"We might as well have an understanding now. You may consider that I'm through working for you from this time."

"But it's right in the middle of the week, and you'll lose your wages by leaving without notice."

"I can stand the loss better than I can work under such a man as you are."

Edwards recoiled as if he had been smitten a blow in the face.

"What do you mean?" he demanded.

"I will not take the trouble to explain if you do not understand me. You are not the sort of a man I want as a friend or as an employer. I was mistaken in you, and the sooner we cease to have anything to do with each other the better. Will you oblige me by stepping out of my way?"

"Well, my girl, you are pretty high and mighty, it seems to me, aren't you?" he said, and a sudden change came into his face, and an equally sudden transformation came into his voice.

He was standing directly in front of her now, and again laid one hand on her shoulder.

She strove to throw off his grasp, but it tightened, and a fierce and brief struggle ensued.

As soon as she found the man really meant to detain her,



her free hand suddenly flashed into sight, and it held a revolver.

Although she had nerve enough to use it, she was unaccustomed to handling a weapon, and it was knocked from her hand the instant she brought it into sight.

Before she could resume her struggle the man gripped her arm with sudden fierceness, and exclaimed, with his lips close to her ear:

"Hear this, girl! Christopher Kimball's life is in my hands! Go back and do your work and do nothing else except as I bid you, and I'll see that the young man lives. Do you hear that, girl?"

She drew a short, quick breath and ceased her struggles.

At the same time she raised her eyes, and as she did so she saw something beyond her assailant which caused her eyes to droop, and something like a smile to cross her face.

"Will the gentleman show his profile?"

In a low, silvery tone these words were uttered close to the ear of Edwards.

He wheeled quickly, and found himself looking into the muzzle of a dainty little weapon held in a dainty little hand—the hand of Foxy Fan!

---

### CHAPTER XIII.

#### JARED JOYCE'S "LIVER PAD."

If Edwards was skilled in hiding his emotions, his cunning failed him at this moment.

The weapon which threatened him was of small calibre, but it was held in uncomfortable closeness, and the hand which held it seemed to be an old one at the trick.

He had already realized this, and he was in momentary uncertainty as to whether he had better take to his heels in ignominious flight or make a stand of defiance which he had not the nerve to back up if the girl pushed him too far.

He quickly decided to carry neither of these out in detail.

Otherwise, he "split the difference."

He thrust his hands into his pockets and returned the look of Foxy Fan with the best show of boldness that he could put on.



He also tried to re-assume the mask-like expression which seldom left his face.

"Well, miss, what are you going to say about it?" he demanded.

"I am not going to say much," said Foxy Fan.

As she spoke she tapped the little weapon with the forefinger of her left hand, and added:

"I am going to let this do the talking."

"But you are a cheeky young woman, it seems to me. What business have you interfering with my private affairs?"

"Just face about, my gentleman, and wag yourself back to your own quarters, or I'll let this gun go!"

There was an earnestness in her tone and a grimness in her look that convinced him that she meant what she said.

He still lingered; however, essaying to still keep up a show of defiance.

"I am going to give you just a quarter of a minute to get a move on you, and I am going to count it by the beats of my own heart—and let me tell you it's beating rather fast! I shall call it a second to every beat!"

Still in that silvery voice came the words, spoken half banteringly, as if it was nothing but a joke.

But to Edwards it was no joke. He was right where he had got to back down; and he lost no more precious moments in beginning the backing process.

Turning on his heel, he started out toward his own quarters at anything but a dignified walk.

He did not really wish to run, so it was really a walk, although he took strides which were about as long as the length of his limbs would allow. He took these strides "square heel-and toe," as if he had been trained all his life for a pedestrian.

He was followed by a mocking peal of laughter from Foxy Fan, and never had a sound rung in the ears of Edwards which made those ears burn as did that laugh of the Faro Sharp.

And to add to the painfulness of it, Mollie Elliot joined in it. And it seemed to him as if half a dozen wicked sprites were screaming out their contempt for him.



"He's awfully mad now," said Foxy Fan. "But you don't care as long as you are not going to work for him longer. Then you know you are going to be my guest."

While Foxy Fan and Mollie returned to the cabin of the former, Edwards returned directly to his quarters, and hurried up to the room occupied by Jared Joyce.

He had to knock several times before he could induce the old money shark to cease snoring and open the door for him.

"You have fought shy long enough," said Edwards, when the door was closed and they were standing face to face.

"I don't know what you mean—I don't know what you mean."

"You haven't showed your colors in this affair either one side or the other. Don't you know that the town has taken sides—part in favor of Joseph Gentry, and the rest against him?"

"I heard something about it," was the cautious reply.

"But don't I know that you're on the side that's against him?"

"That's just a suspicion, Mr. Edwards—just a suspicion."

"Don't waste any more wind talking. The time has come when you must show up on one side or the other. Do you say that you will run against those who are working to rid the town of Joseph Gentry?"

"I wouldn't like to say that."

"Would you say that you were working with those who were trying to rid the town of him?"

"I might not like to say it——"

"And yet I know that's what you will do. I know it perfectly well, and I know that you hate that man as bad as I do. When you hired this room here I told you that no questions would be asked about the kind of business you chose to conduct. You have been unmolested, although there have been those who have been more inquisitive than you would have liked had you known about it. I have kept them out of the way, and let you run your affairs as you chose. Now there's something I want of you."



"I hope you don't want me to come out strong against the man. I mean I hope you don't want me to say anything so as to get it round town, so that if anything should happen that I would be involved in any way. You know he's an influential man in Denver, and I'm from Denver myself, and, to so express it, we are fellow-citizens. And yet when it comes to my personal feelings, I am willing that you should think anything you have a mind to—anything you have a mind to."

The old man's voice was low and husky as he uttered these words.

And for the first time he showed to another human being, both in his voice and speech, how much he really hated and feared—perhaps feared more than hated—Joseph Gentry, of Denver, the Gilt-Edged Sport.

Edwards had assumed that he meant to effectually cover the anxiety which he must have felt at this time.

The truth was that this man who had posed as such a moral character in the new town of Leadville, realized that there was some danger of his true character leaking out.

The time had come when he must act swiftly, for the days were numbered that he should spend as a respectable citizen of the town.

He felt that there was no one more capable of helping him in the time of need than Jared Joyce.

But, as with everybody who had dealings with the old money shark, the latter tantalized him with delays and windy speeches which did not bring them nearer the point.

But there seemed to be no way in the world of making Jared Joyce talk fast, or, indeed, of talking in any way except according to his own sweet will.

Edwards paced the room two or three times, while Jared Joyce, with his skull cap pulled down to his ears and his head settled down to his shoulders, crouched in his chair and stared at the round holes in the curtain from under his heavy brows.

At last Edwards came back and faced the old money shark, while a fierce speech trembled upon his lips.

Just then there came a knock upon the door—such a knock as only a man of will can deliver.



Jared Joyce started up, and Edwards could see that there was unmistakable alarm in the old man's face.

Edwards leaned forward, bringing his lips close to Joyce's ear.

"Is it somebody that you expected to see?" he demanded.

"No, no."

"But you seem to recognize the knock?"

"No, no. But I don't like the sound of it. What shall we do—what shall we do?"

Before Edwards could speak the knock was repeated, and this time more imperatively than before, and then Edwards said:

"The one that is there must have heard our voices, and so we can't pretend that we aren't here. You had better open the door, and my course of action will depend on who it is that has come."

Jared Joyce got up, shambled over to the door, fumbled at the bolt, and flung open the door.

Swiftly and silently the man who was outside stepped across the threshold, shut the door, shot the bolt in its place, and then stood, grave, dark, and cool, looking at the two inmates of the room.

The intruder was Parson Jim.

He wore a long coat, with a collar and cap, and the collar and cap were used as a disguise; so he had not been noticed in coming into the town.

Now, however, he had turned down the collar and flung up the cap, evidently wishing to make no further attempt at disguise.

Jared Joyce shambled back to his chair and sank into it without a word.

Parson Jim turned to Edwards and exclaimed:

"So you are here talking with the old money shark, and scheming, too, I suppose?"

"I was talking with him, yes," said Edwards, and for the first time all the domineering assertiveness was gone from his voice.

It was as if he were facing his master.

"But I didn't come to see you," said Parson Jim. "So you may go out and leave me alone with Jared Joyce."

"But I wasn't through with him yet."



Edwards was interrupted by an imperative gesture from Parson Jim.

"I don't want you here—you may go. And be sure you go far enough so that you can't play eavesdropper. If I catch you at that you may figure up yourself what the result is apt to be. Now get a move on you."

Edwards hesitated no longer.

Parson Jim opened the door for him, and watched him until he had gone down the corridor, then closed the door and locked it again, and faced Jared Joyce.

Parson Jim stood over the old money shark for a moment, and the eyes of the two met in silence.

"I know all about it, old man," were the first words of the mountain bandit.

"What do you know all about?" faltered Joyce.

"I know where the thirty thousand dollars which Kid-Glove Kit hid in his cabin has gone!"

"You know all about it?" repeated Joyce, his voice more faint and husky than ever.

"Yes, I know all about it, and I'm going to ask you not to waste your wind repeating my words. I have come here for the money. You will hand it over!"

"But it isn't here, Parson Jim—it isn't here," said Joyce, faintly.

"That's a lie, old man, and you know it. You would never hide that money outside of the place where you slept. You haven't had a chance to get out of the town, and so it's here. What's more, it is on your person. You wouldn't hide it in your room for fear that something would happen and you couldn't return to it. You are a big enough simpleton in some things, but you are shrewd and sharp when it comes to money matters. Two or three others have been over to Kid-Glove Kit's cabin, and all have found it gone. That was because Jared Joyce got ahead of them. Now, no words, for time is precious. I can't stay in Leadville long, and I'm going to have that money before I go. So hand over the cash!"

"But I tell you I haven't got it," exclaimed Jared Joyce, springing to his feet, a desperate gleam in his eyes.

"And I tell you you are lying!"



Jared Joyce brought one foot down upon the floor with a quick, sharp thump which was evidently intended as a signal.

He would have repeated it, but the white hand of Parson Jim shot out and clutched him by the shoulder, drew him forward, and bent him across a table, twisting his collar and holding him there while a low, gurgling cry broke from his lips.

One of Jared Joyce's hands fumbled in his pocket, and half drew a weapon.

But it was knocked from his grasp and fell upon the floor.

Parson Jim, still with that terrible clutch on the old money shark, still holding him by the collar and twisting it, stooped and picked up the weapon which had fallen and pressed the muzzle of it to the forehead of Jared Joyce.

Then he seemed to think better of it, and slipped the pistol into his pocket, while simultaneously he drew a knife which flashed before the eyes of the old man.

"If you want to die with a lie on your lips now's your chance. If you know how fast your heart beats you can measure pretty near how long you have got to live by keeping count."

As these words came from the lips of Parson Jim, Joyce felt something like the sting of a bee on his throat.

He knew that it was the knife held in the hand of his captor.

He dared not struggle—he dared not even turn his head, for he knew that a single movement meant sure death to him—an easy death, perhaps, but a sure one.

"Now you have got to be searched. Is the money on your person or not? Remember what I just told you!"

There was a moment's silence, and then Jared Joyce exclaimed:

"Yes, yes, I have the money."

"The whole thirty thousand dollars?"

"I have got all the money," was the response.

Quickly the knife was dropped, and the hand which was at liberty, by a swift and deft movement searched the pockets of the old man, and found there two or three



weapons which he had concealed.

That was all.

Not a word passed the lips of Parson Jim.

With swift, strong movements, he began to tear open the jacket and waistcoat of the old man.

In another moment he had stripped them off, then followed the shirt, until with a swiftness and invincibleness that was simply irresistible, Jared Joyce found his lean figure stripped to the skin.

Only one article remained upon his person.

That was a pad belted about him at the waist, and filling out the hollow of his crooked back.

Quick as a flash of light, Parson Jim's knife cut the belt and took off the pad.

A single glance at it showed him what it contained.

Between two layers of leather to which they were attached by thread, were more than a dozen thick rolls of Government bills.

And every bill was of large denomination.

Parson Jim unceremoniously thrust the bulky package under his long coat, and then, while Jared Joyce stood crouching and shivering beside his table, the mountain bandit turned Joyce's clothes over, examining each piece by itself.

But nothing more was concealed about them.

"That's all, old man. You better get into your clothes. If you miss the warmth of this pad on your back, I reckon you can fix up something less valuable that will keep off the cold just as well. A thirty-thousand-dollar liver pad is a trifle too luxurious for an old carcass like yours—do you hear?"

A smile curled the lips of Parson Jim as he said this.

Without another word, and without waiting to see how the old man disposed of himself, Parson Jim strode to the door, flung it open, and went out.

Down to the street he hurried, where a horse was waiting for him at the door, and in another minute he was riding at a swift but easy pace toward the outskirts of the town.

As he went, however, the slight figure of Mollie Elliot



slipped out from the rear door of the building and ran across to the cabin of Foxy Fan, her cheeks flushed, and a mighty secret in her little head.

She had been a listener and witness to the thrilling scene in which Parson Jim had been the victor and Jared Joyce the victim.

---

## CHAPTER XIV.

### A LEADVILLE MOB.

The brave little mite hurrying to communicate her wonderful secret to Foxy Fan did not then see the one she was seeking.

She reached the cabin, entered the faro-room, found it vacant, and then rapped on the inner door.

There was no response.

After a swift and almost frantic search she knew that the Faro Sharp was gone.

Whither and why she could only conjecture.

She hurried out bent upon making a search for her outside, for she knew that the matter she had to communicate was of the utmost importance, and that there should not be a moment of delay.

There was no one else in the town whom she dared to trust with such a secret.

That the money which had been in the custody of Kid-Glove Kit had been found by Jared Joyce, concealed upon his person, and that Parson Jim, suspecting even if he did not know this fact, had secured the treasure by that swift, determined act which she had witnessed, made a big burden of a secret which was almost too much for the girl to bear alone.

That something must be done at once she fully realized. She could think of nothing better to do than to continue her search for Foxy Fan, since she dare not take any other action on her own responsibility.

Yet the girl little realized the danger which she was incurring in attempting to balk the schemes of such a man as Parson Jim.

In the meantime Foxy Fan was making arrangements which were to end in the rescue of Gentleman Joe.



She knew that there was no time to be lost.

She knew that there was a plot on foot to break into the jail and to drag him forth to a certain and murderous end before friends could be rallied to his defense.

There were few to whom she dared to trust the truth, and it was hard to organize a number of men who might be trusted to defend him and to prevent the execution of the conspiracy in season.

The man on guard was trustworthy, of this she felt sure.

To him she imparted the truth, and from him she obtained permission to go in and out of the jail at her own free will.

Just at nightfall, when she knew that the hour was drawing night, she appeared at the jail, and a few swift words passed between her and the guard.

Perhaps it was the girl's earnestness and eloquence more than anything else that won.

The result of the conference was that Foxy Fan thrust into the hand of the guard a parcel which represented all her gains since coming to Leadville—and it was no small sum, either, for her bank had been liberally patronized.

And then when Foxy Fan was in the cell of Gentleman Joe, the guard, watching his chance, well knowing that the one who would relieve him would be there in half an hour, waited to see if the coast was clear, and then hurried to the rear of the building, where a horse was waiting for him, sprang into the saddle, and galloped away alone.

Perhaps he was recreant to his duty, and he might have felt a little uncomfortable as he rode away, tightly grasping the price of his act in his hand.

Yet he consoled himself with the thought that the end would be right even though he might now have to bear the name of having acted a treacherous part.

As the sound of the retreating hoof-beats of the guard died away, Foxy Fan thrust weapons into the hand of Gentleman Joe, and then went out to see that no one was near to observe them. Going back, she told him to make ready.

She had brought a bundle with her to the jail, and again



standing outside, pistol in hand, she waited for the prisoner to make the change in his attire.

This was quickly accomplished, and then Joseph Gentry, the Gilt-Edged Sport, came forth from the jail and joined his faithful friend.

"There's a horse waiting for you," she said. "It is near my dwelling, and all you have to do is to follow me thither and then ride—ride for liberty! In a week or less you may safely return to finish your work."

"If I am not too late," he said.

"It's the only way. You can do nothing safely here now."

"Did you ever know me to wait till things were safe? I reckon I've done more things that weren't safe than I have those that were. I don't reckon that I'm going to put a blot on my record after so many pages have been kept clean. No, Foxy Fan, with all gratitude for your kindness and nobility, and all appreciation of your judgement which in most cases is better than mine, I am not going to run away from Leadville just because there happens to be danger here. As you say, there are two elements here in Leadville, and the better is the stronger. I can carry out my work here now that I know exactly where to look for danger. There will be no better time to make my ante than to-night. And a lone hand is one of the strongest that can be played—you know that, my girl, for you have won many a game yourself in that way!"

Foxy Fan was silent for a moment. She would have been glad to have used her eloquence to have persuaded him not to try to carry out his purpose.

She knew that it would be useless for him to do so.

And if he were to remain and persist in the clearing up of the murder of Hime Henderson and in assisting Kid-Glove Kit, then every moment of delay here, under present conditions, would make the matter all the more difficult.

"Well, then I suppose it must be as you say—it always is so. I shall keep saving your life for you, and some day I shall have the satisfaction of seeing you throw it away. But here goes, and the next time you find yourself in a tight pinch and Foxy Fan is on deck, you'll find her just



as ready to put in her work for you. At any rate, the Gilt-Edged Sport has a pretty good record for being able to look out for himself."

The girl hurried forth as she spoke, intending to make sure that there were no spies about.

But Gentleman Joe did not wait for that.

Now that he was free, he bounded forth from the prison house and was soon at the side of his friend.

They struck out to the rear of the more thickly settled portion of the town, and Gentleman Joe, partially disguised as he was, felt that he was reasonably secure for a moment at least.

A few hurried steps carried them past the spot where the cabin of Foxy Fan was located.

Just as they passed a form sprang up in their path, and Gentleman Joe found himself face to face with Parson Jim.

The latter would have wheeled and beat a hasty retreat had not Foxy Fan sharply exclaimed:

"Down with him! He's the worst possible man to have in Leadville!"

Without waiting to question her word, Gentry sprang upon the man while the latter faced about and the two men grappled.

Neither attempted to draw a weapon.

It was no time then for unnecessary noise, and neither Gentleman Joe nor Parson Jim wished to have their presence betrayed.

Foxy Fan drew back and watched their forms sway to and fro in that desperate struggle which she knew could not last long.

Parson Jim, slender as he was, showed, as he had done before, that he possessed a great amount of physical strength.

For a moment Gentleman Joe found himself well matched.

But he soon proved the superiority of his own physique, and a moment after the two men separated as if they had been suddenly thrown apart by some hidden force.

The next instant out shot the right hand of Joseph Gentry with terrific force.



Down went Parson Jim to the ground—and there he lay senseless at their feet.

Just then there was the sound of footsteps near, and Gentleman Joe knew that this would be no time to tarry.

With just a glance at the form of Parson Jim to make sure that he was disposed of for the time, Gentry bounded away over the rough ground closely followed by Foxy Fan, and turned his steps in the direction of the hotel of which Edwards was the proprietor.

When he reached the rear of the building, which was likewise quite near the cabin of Foxy Fan, Gentleman Joe paused and said:

"I am going in here first to see Jared Joyce. He knows what I want to know, and I can force him to tell me. That Edwards is in this scheme to make an end of me, you may be sure. With him under my thumb, the nerve of the opposition will be cut, and I shall be able to work more openly. But I must go carefully and make every stroke tell. You had better wait outside, and if I want you I will find a way to let you know."

Foxy Fan did not demur.

A minute later Gentry had succeeded in entering the building unobserved, and in ascending the stairs to the room of Jared Joyce.

A knock upon the door received no answer, but he shook it violently, and presently he heard the bolt slip from the socket.

The next instant he was inside, the door closed and bolted again, and he was left with Jared Joyce.

There had come a change over the face of the old man, and, indeed, over his whole appearance.

It was a marvelous one, considering the brief space of time which intervened since their last meeting.

Dry and thin as he was, he seemed to have shrunk and grown old.

His eyes seemed to have sunk more deeply into his head, while he crept round to his chair and sank into it without a word passing his lips.

Gentleman Joe stared at him a moment in silence.

"Well, old man, you look as if you had been pretty se-



verely whipped since I saw you last."

Jared Joyce half sprang to his feet, and an ejaculation burst from his lips.

"Why it's Mr. Gentry—it's Mr. Gentry!" he exclaimed.

It was evident that he was greatly surprised.

For some reason, for Gentry's face was not in the least disguised, Jared Joyce had failed to recognize him at first.

Perhaps this was because the room was dimly lighted, and it was well known that the eyes of the old man were failing.

He seemed not to be displeased when he found out who his visitor really was.

Indeed, there was something like relief as he leaned forward and looked into the face of Gentleman Joe.

After his severe experience with Parson Jim it may be that he was glad to see one who, in times past, had often treated him in a fair and friendly manner.

"It's Joseph Gentry, of Denver, and square on his footwear, too, old man. But what's the matter with you?"

"Why, I thought you were locked up?" Jared Joyce asked.

"So I was. But locks don't hold, and I don't reckon they will when I'm behind them. But there's no time to talk. The time has come when I have a good deal to do with but little time to do it in. Crooked as your record is, there's a chance for you to straighten it a little. Where is Edwards?"

"I haven't seen him for a couple of hours, Mr. Gentry—not for a couple of hours."

"But you have an idea where he is?"

"I suppose he's round the house somewhere. I believe he's waiting for some one to call and see him."

"His particular friends and my particular foes, I suppose?"

"It might be. But I'm not supposed to know."

"Well, I don't care as long as I don't have to tackle them all at once. Now, about a certain sum of money hidden in a certain cabin in Leadville. You know what cabin I mean, and what money, Jared Joyce, and you needn't pretend you don't. The property was in the care of Kid-



Glove Kit, and you have been plotting to get it into your fist ever since you first heard he had it."

A certain odd light seemed to leap into the eyes of Jared Joyce.

"I haven't got the money, Mr. Gentry—I haven't got the money."

"Then you know where it is?"

"Somebody took it from me."

"Somebody took it from you? So you admit that you had it in your possession?"

"I might as well admit it. The time has come when there is no advantage in my telling anything but the truth. I have had a hard experience, Mr. Gentry—a hard experience."

"Don't try to tell the whole of it, especially since you have to repeat parts of it two or three times. But if it's the truth you're giving me, explain more of it, and it won't go near as hard with you as it would if you were to keep it back."

"I am willing to tell the truth, Mr. Gentry. The money was in my possession, I'll admit that. But only a few hours ago a man called here who seemed to know all about that and all about everything else. He was the one they call Parson Jim. He's a very devil, Mr. Gentry—a very devil."

Jared Joyce was upon his feet trembling from head to foot.

His thin frame seemed to be fairly convulsed with a passion which he could not wholly express through the medium of speech.

He shambled across the room, and then came back again, sat down, jumped up, and once more shambled to and fro across his den.

Gentleman Joe watched him in silence a moment waiting for him to become a little more calm.

It seemed almost impossible that he would be able to get a very coherent account of what he wished from Jared Joyce until the latter was in a little calmer mood.

But Jared Joyce seemed rapidly to overcome the excitement which controlled him.

Returning to his chair, he dropped into it and exclaimed:



"I am willing to tell you all, Mr. Gentry—I am willing to tell you all. For the first time in my life, I am going to tell a man that I haven't done just right, and that I am, as it were, caught in my own trap, Mr. Gentry—caught in my own trap."

To draw the truth from Jared Joyce was not from that moment such a very difficult matter.

He seemed to have thoroughly made up his mind that nothing but the truth would serve him. There was a stronger motive for doing right than wrong, and for once prudence put him on the right side of things.

He rapidly repeated the story of his encounter with Parson Jim a few hours before. He confessed to having the thirty thousand dollars which had been in Kid-Glove Kit's cabin in his possession. He told of Parson Jim's getting it away from him, of his own attempt to conceal it upon his person, and how the attempt ended.

He admitted in answer to various queries from Gentleman Joe that Edwards was also after the money, and that he was in league with the roughest element of the town in several of their conspiracies, the details of which even Jared Joyce did not know.

"And now you must know that to-night the men were to approach the jail where you were locked up, as a mob break it open, and drag you forth that they might execute what they call lynch law upon you! Indeed, Mr. Gentry —"

Jared Joyce fumbled at a fob and pulled out a silver watch, and sprang to his feet to exclaim:

"This is the very hour that they were going to do it! Inside of ten minutes they will break into the jail and find you gone! What will they do, Mr. Gentry?—what will they do?"

"They won't do quite as much as they would if they had found me there," was Gentleman Joe's dry retort.

"But they will tear or burn down every building in Leadville until they find you. They mean death to you. There are half a dozen men among them who wouldn't give up the fight easily. I am afraid, Mr. Gentry, that you are in a great danger. If I were you I would get a horse,



and a fast one, and I would get outside of Leadville just as quick as that horse would carry me."

Jared Joyce could not have spoken with greater eagerness if he had been really solicitous for the welfare of the Gilt-Edged Sport.

Perhaps at this moment the man would really have liked to help Gentleman Joe to escape from the danger which menaced him.

"Don't worry about me, old man. But if you know anything that you can do for my aid, it will be greatly appreciated. I reckon you're in a situation where it will be a benefit to you to have some things to your credit instead of having everything against you. If Edwards is at the head of this plot, and they are making ready to raid the jail now, will he be likely to be with them or will he stay here?"

"He will stay here. He's not the man to show his hand in a game—never will show his hand."

"He's the style to deal blind as you say. Now can you manage to get him up here to see you inside of five minutes?"

The old money shark thought a moment, and then said:

"Yes, I can manage it."

"You are sure you can make it work, and that I can trust you this time?"

"I can make it work, Mr. Gentry—I can make it work."

"Well, be quick about it. I'll get out of sight and wait."

Gentleman Joe let the old man shamble out of the room, leaving him to think that he intended to conceal himself inside of it.

As soon as the sound of the man's steps died away, Gentleman Joe went out and stepped into another empty apartment close by, leaving the door ajar.

There he waited.

He had not long to wait, for he soon heard a heavy tread upon the stairs which he recognized as that of Edwards.

The latter came alone, and he seemed, for some reason, to be in great haste to reach Jared Joyce's room.

Whatever pretext the old man had used, it had made Edwards eager to fall into the trap.



He opened the door, stepped in, and had barely done so when he felt a hand on his collar—a hand that twisted and pulled with such force that brought an ejaculation of pain and dismay from the man's lips.

Instantly he found himself upon the floor with a man leaning over him and his knees upon his breast.

And the gleaming eyes which looked into his were those of Joseph Gentry—the man whom he supposed to be in the Leadville jail waiting to be dragged out by the angry mob whom he had set onto the work.

Gentleman Joe did not wait for the man to ask any questions or offer any remarks.

With a deftness which showed long experience, Gentleman Joe tied his hands, which made him secure for the time being. Then he assisted his prisoner to his feet, bade him sit in the chair, and then bound him securely to the latter.

The chair was so light that the man could have walked about with the chair tied to him, but there would not have been any advantage in doing so.

But it was sufficient to hamper him and make sure that he would not escape from the room.

"Now we won't waste any words in talking," said Gentleman Joe, breaking the long silence. "I know all about you and the game you are onto. There's going to be the biggest sort of a picnic here in Leadville inside of an hour, and you and I are going to figure pretty prominently in it. You reckoned that there was going to be a hanging-bee here, and that I was going to be the one to dance. But I think you'll find that your neck is in full as much danger as mine although I am going to try to get you a fair trial and have your case all straight and regular. Do you know, my man, that I know who killed Hime Henderson?"

Up to this moment Edwards had submitted to the inevitable, and had retained that mask-like imperturbability of countenance.

But now, Gentleman Joe, gazing into his face, saw that he had grown white as death.

The man's lips moved clumsily, thickly, but not a word passed them.



It was as if they had been smitten with sudden paralysis.

Still the gaze of Gentleman Joe rested upon his face, cold, penetrating, accusing.

"Do you know that I know," said Gentleman Joe again, "that that crime had a witness. That witness is the one that has been suspected of committing the crime. Christopher Kimball was in this room when you killed Hime Henderson! He saw you do it!"

Whiter yet, if possible, grew the face of Edwards.

He seemed to have been seized by a sudden palsy which shook him from head to feet.

His teeth chattered like castanets, and he shrank back as if he would shrink out of sight and out of existence in the frantic wish that human eyes might never look upon his face again!

"I don't know what your motive was," said Gentleman Joe, again breaking the oppressive silence, "but I know that you committed the crime, because there was a witness, and that witness has confessed the truth! Have you nothing to say?"

Again the man's lips moved in that slow, clumsy way, but no words were emitted.

At that moment a shambling step was heard in the corridor. Jared Joyce opened the door and looked in.

"The mob has attacked the jail!" he exclaimed. "And they have found the prisoner gone!"

As if in confirmation of his words, what had seemed at first to be but a murmur from the street below, rose into a roaring shout or chorus of shouts which were as full of malignant anger and disappointment as could be imagined.

The sound of hurrying feet, the signaling shouts here and there all proclaimed the excitement which had been sprung upon the town.

Gentleman Joe went out of the room, shut the door, and locked it, and at the same time Jared Joyce hurried down stairs.

Gentry, looking out of the window, saw the lights flashing hither and thither, saw dark forms running, and the black mob gathered about the place where he had been so lately confined, and from which he had escaped.



A moment later a sudden flare of light flashed up, and tongues of flame enveloped the Leadville jail.

## CHAPTER XV.

### CONCLUSION.

Gentleman Joe saw a number of men running toward the hotel.

There were already several men in the building, but Gentleman Joe had the best of reasons for believing that they had nothing to do with the movement of mobbing the jail.

Hurrying back to Joyce's den, Gentleman Joe loosed Edwards and compelled him to descend to the lower floor.

There were few words spoken in that rapid rush down the stairs, but those few were sufficient to apprise Edwards that he had a very small chance for his life.

Foxy Fan had entered the building, and she met Gentleman Joe and Edwards at the foot of the stairs.

"Has he caved?" she asked.

"He has caved. He will pass out the order that he was responsible for the escape of their prisoner. He admits that he knows he did it in self-defense, for he was on the spot, and Leadville Luke was acting under his orders. They were both after the money which Kid-Glove Kit was supposed to have concealed in his cabin. He has admitted it to me, and he is ready to admit it to the leader of the mob yonder. Let word reach them that the leader comes alone to receive orders from Edwards. If more than one man comes at a time, they won't get in, that's all. And if they try they will be apt to hear something break. For I have gotten into this game too far now to be beaten in it."

The guests of the house were upon the spot, and to one of these was the errand intrusted.

He hurried forth, and not until then did the inmates of the house recognize Gentleman Joe.

In a moment they had declared their willingness to stand up for him in case it came to a fight.

Edwards had been forced to yield in the manner indicated by Gentry's directions for the sake of saving his own neck for a while, at least.



For if Gentry had made public the fact that Edwards was the murderer of Hime Henderson the mob would have been ready enough to have taken him in charge rather than to have been disappointed in the delight of an anticipated hanging-bee.

Nobody knew the fickle temper of such a crowd better than did Edwards himself.

Within five minutes the leader of the mob had returned and alone.

With Gentleman Joe standing by his side, Edwards made the statement concerning the killing of Leadville Luke, which was no more nor less than the simple truth.

The leader was inclined at first to visit his wrath for having been deceived upon Edwards on the spot. But he was diverted by a hint from Gentleman Joe that better game would be given them later, and that it would be worth their while to await developments.

The work which then devolved upon Gentleman Joe was far from easy.

He first had to get together a number of trustworthy men, and with their assistance marshal a good number who would be ready to stand up for justice in the legal sense of the term.

Foxy Fan, meantime, without having had a chance to exchange a word with Gentleman Joe, had hurried out and gone directly to her own quarters.

Gentleman Joe had barely time to tell her of the fact which he had drawn from Jared Joyce about the thirty thousand dollars which had been hidden in the cabin of Kid-Glove Kit.

A number of men had been sent out already to secure Parson Jim if he were still within the limits of the town.

The time had been so short that Gentry did not believe that he had had time to recover his senses and escape.

As soon as he was at liberty he hurried to the spot where the encounter with Parson Jim had taken place.

Of course the man was gone, and none of the men had found any trace of him.

Gentry next went to the cabin of Foxy Fan and found that she was gone.



He was told that she had been seen riding away toward the mountains with the speed of the wind.

Within an hour Gentleman Joe had a small but select party mounted and ready to follow his leadership.

This party started out in pursuit of Foxy Fan.

In a little more than an hour they reached the spot where they could go no farther with horses.

Here they dismounted, and another hour was consumed in going over a comparatively short distance owing to the difficulties of the way.

Then at the brink of a gorge they were surprised to meet Foxy Fan herself.

In a few brief words she told them that she had fairly overtaken Parson Jim—that, indeed, he had had a very short start of her.

She had managed to keep out of sight, and had seen him descend part way into the gorge, go along a narrow ledge of rock, and then disappear over the side of it by means of a lariat.

The whole process had been observed by her in detail, and she was hastening back to notify the pursuers that she had solved the mystery of Parson Jim's hiding-place.

It was evident then if it had not been before why she was so suspicious of the man called Parson Jim.

The latter had appeared innocent enough, and Gentleman Joe had been thrown into his company a little and had found no reason to suspect him of duplicity.

Foxy Fan had seen him once under other conditions, and though she would not state the exact incident in which her ire had been aroused against him, it was clear that she had had ample reason for the action she had taken and in which Gentleman Joe had interfered.

"Why didn't you tell me this at the time?" Gentry demanded.

"Why didn't you give me the chance?"

"I suppose you're right. I put my finger in a pie without knowing what was inside of it. You were right, Foxy Fan, and I'm going to admit that I was wrong—all wrong, except that you didn't go to work the right way to get that fellow into limbo, where he belonged."

"Just as you say, Gentleman Joe. But as the game is



winding up you will find that I have had the flush all the while—isn't that so?"

"Yes, you hold the flush. And when the game is won, as it soon will be, it will be yours, and not mine."

This conversation, brief as it was, was held while the little party was making its descent to the ledge of rock and making its way to the den of Parson Jim.

It was a bold undertaking to descend into that den under such conditions.

It was managed so that two could go down at a time, and Gentleman Joe was one of the first two to descend.

But to their astonishment the den had only one inmate.

That one was the prisoner—Christopher Kimball!

The latter admitted that he had been put under pressure with the intention of forcing him to join the band, which was very small in numbers.

He had steadily refused to do so, and probably would have had to pay dearly for his persistence had not Parson Jim returned just in time to warn his men of the danger of pursuit.

All had fled, but as they had less than half an hour's start, they could not be far away.

Gentry and his men struck upon the trail, and by daylight had come up with the little band of bandits.

Parson Jim was with them, and, somewhat to their surprise, he made no attempt at resistance.

Indeed, he seemed as meek and mild as any parson, yielding his men and himself as prisoners, but saying very little.

A return was made to the den, where some treasure was found, but a rich haul was not made.

The thirty thousand dollars which Parson Jim had taken from Jared Joyce was found upon the prisoner's person, for he had had no chance to dispose of it elsewhere.

This, therefore, was recovered intact.

The prisoners were safely landed at Leadville in due time, though Kid-Glove Kit had necessarily to keep out of sight until Edwards had been taken out of town under strong guard with the other prisoners.

Then the truth was announced—that Edwards had been



the murderer of Hime Henderson.

The rougher element of the town were so enraged by this discovery that several of them actually banded together to start in pursuit of the prisoners.

It was their purpose to overtake the prisoners and wreak their vengeance on the man who had so cleverly pulled the wool over their eyes.

But it is needless to say that they were too late to accomplish their purpose.

Gentleman Joe had been careful that they should not know the truth while there was any chance of their making such use of it.

When it was known that Kid-Glove Kit had been done so great injustice and that all the while he had been one of the most worthy of the new citizens of the town, those who had been the most eager to do him injury were the first to make amends.

In fact, for the next few days Kid-Glove Kit was fairly lionized.

It presently came out that the money which Kid-Glove Kit had in his possession had been left in his custody for two heirs, half-sisters, one of whom lived in the East, and of whom he had been made guardian, while the other was supposed to be somewhere in the West, whither she had gone in quest of her father.

This was none other than Mollie Elliot.

She had found upon going from place to place that her father had been one of the first to come to Leadville and that he had been in company with Hime Henderson.

What the trouble was between them, she did not know. But it was clear that he had been killed either in a fight or deliberately by his partner—Hime Henderson, the High Roller.

It was no wonder, therefore, that she had been reluctant to disclose what she knew concerning the murder of Henderson himself.

She had the best of reasons for being glad that he had met such an end.

The half-sister at the East remained there, but her money was invested for her in the vicinity of Leadville



by Christopher Kimball, acting under the advice of Gentleman Joe.

And, as usual with such investments, when a lucky sport known as the Gilt-Edged had anything to do with them, it turned out profitable, and Mollie and her half-sister soon found themselves comfortably rich.

Mollie had no wish to return to the East—and now that Kid-Glove Kit had made friends there and was doing so well, he was inclined to stay where fortune favored him.

And it was the most natural thing in the world that Mollie and Kid-Glove Kit should marry, and it is the most natural things that generally come to pass.

So Gentleman Joe was present at another wedding.

The guards to whom the prisoners were intrusted reached their destination as expected and with the full number of prisoners. Yet when they were called up for examination it was found that the one who was supposed to be Parson Jim was not Parson Jim at all.

How it had come about—by what means Jim had given them the slip and some one else had been substituted in his place was a mystery which was not solved for many a long day.

Edwards and the other prisoners were brought to trial, and had to meet the fate which they deserved.

But not then for a long time was anything found of Parson Jim. It was said that the body of a man answering his description was found in a lonely mountain gulch, and the coyotes were beginning to feast upon it.

Foxy Fan remained in Leadville for some time. Gentleman Joe, after a few months, returned to Denver.

Before separating from the Faro Sharp he did what it would have seemed impossible for him to do after what had passed in his life.

He asked Fanny Calvert to be his wife.

And her reply was this:

"That, Gentleman Joe, can never be—and you ought to know it! You had no business to say it! You don't love me enough for that, and you have just said it because you thought you owed it to me. And let me tell you right here, Joseph Gentry, that you owe me nothing except



your friendship and your confidence—just that, and that debt I want you to pay in installments as long as we both live!”

And the hour came sooner than either of them expected when one installment, and a great one, should be paid.

(THE END.)

RALPH SMITH  
3 BROOK STREET; ROUTE 44  
LAWRENCE, MASS.  
MAGAZINES AND NOVELS

OCT 25 1922

~~RALPH SMITH  
19 SHERIDAN ST.  
LAWRENCE, MASS.~~



SEND for latest list of boys &c new-  
els that we sell for 84c each, post  
paid, or exchange. 10 Samples 85c.  
*Ralph Smith,* 8 Brook St., R. 44  
Lawrence, Mass.

# THE LOG CABIN LIBRARY

POCKET EDITION.

PRICE, TEN CENTS PER COPY.

PUBLISHED WEEKLY.

The very best tales of Western adventure, in the neatest and most convenient form for handy reading.

Elegant covers in colors, illustrating scenes from the stories.

## Catalogue.

- No. 78—JESSE JAMES OUTDONE.  
No. 79—GENTLEMAN JOE'S GAUNTLET.  
No. 80—A SECOND JESSE JAMES.  
No. 81—GRIMES THE DETECTIVE.  
No. 82—GENTLEMAN JOE'S GRAPPLE.  
No. 83—HOWARD, THE BURGLAR.  
No. 84—THE LOUISIANA JESSE JAMES.  
No. 85—GENTLEMAN JOE AT GOPHER GULCH.  
No. 86—THE COLLIS EXPRESS ROBBERS.  
No. 87—THE PERTH AMBOY MYSTERY.  
No. 88—GENTLEMAN JOE'S SEVEN SPOT.  
No. 89—THE DALTON BOYS.  
No. 90—GENTLEMAN JOE'S MOONLIGHT MATINEE.  
No. 91—O'BRIEN, THE KING OF SHARPERS.  
No. 92—GENTLEMAN JOE AT FULL FLUSH.  
No. 93—DETECTIVE MANTON MAYNE.  
No. 94—GENTLEMAN JOE'S JOKER.  
No. 95—GENTLEMAN JOE AT GUNNISON.  
No. 96—GENTLEMAN JOE'S GARRISON.  
No. 97—GENTLEMAN JOE'S CATCH.  
No. 98—THE SAFE BREAKERS' COMBINATION.  
No. 99—GENTLEMAN JOE'S DENVER DUET.  
No. 100—GENTLEMAN JOE'S DOOM-DISPATCH.  
No. 101—GENTLEMAN JOE'S LEADVILLE LEAD.  
No. 102—GENTLEMAN JOE AT LUCIFER LODGE.

For sale by newsdealers everywhere, or sent by mail, postpaid on receipt of price, Ten Cents per copy, by the publishers,

STREET & SMITH, 238 William St., New York.

RALPH SMITH  
19 SEWARD ST.  
LAWRENCE, MASS.



SEND for latest list of boys 5c nov-  
els that we sell for 34c each, post  
paid, or exchange. 10 Samples 50c.  
3 Brook St., R. 44  
Ralph Smith, Lawrence, Mass.

## Dashing Diamond Dick, Jr.

The latest exploits of this, the most popular of Western heroes, can be found only in the Diamond Dick, Jr., the boys' favorite Five Cent Weekly. This publication contains 32 magazine size pages of reading matter and an elegant illuminated cover illustration.

### LIST OF LATEST ISSUES.

- 138—Diamond Dick, Jr.'s Stag Party; or, Handsome Harry's Hand Full of Winners.
- 139—Diamond Dick's Drop Shot.
- 140—Diamond Dick's Dare; or, The Bravos of the Bitter Roots.
- 141—Diamond Dick, Jr.'s Long Odds; or, The Neck-tie Party at Bilkers.
- 142—Diamond Dick, Jr.'s One Star Play; or, Standing Pat on a Lone Hand.
- 143—Diamond Dick, Jr.'s, Silent Cue; or, Fifteen Balls in One Pocket.
- 144—Diamond Dick's Dead Heat; or, The Pirates of Pend d'Oreille.
- 145—Diamond Dick's Deuce Ace.
- 146—Diamond Dick Jr.'s Wheel Horse, or, A Whole Team and Something to Spare.
- 147—Diamond Dick Jr.'s Pair of Jacks; or, Won by a Nose at the Free-and-Easy.
- 148—Diamond Dick Jr.'s C. O'D; or, Two Bits of Queer at Hand-me-Down.
- 149—Diamond Dick's Divvy.
- 150—Diamond Dick's Deep Dodge.
- 151—Diamond Dick, Jr.'s High-Low-Pede; or, At Work on a Chinese Puzzle.
- 152—Diamond Dick, Jr.'s Live Wire; or, A Bad Man off His Trolley.
- 153—Diamond Dick, Jr.'s Tough Customers; or, Six Feet of Rope at Doolittles.
- 154—Diamond Dick's Danger-Line.
- 155—Diamond Dick's Dummy.
- 156—Diamond Dick, Jr.'s Cyclone Pard; or, A Bad Wobble at War-Whoop.
- 157—Diamond Dick, Jr.'s Standing Dash; or, Scoring a Point at Chalkeye.
- 158—Diamond Dick, Jr.'s Five-Minute Turn; or, The Footlight Favorites.
- 159—Diamond Dick, Jr.'s Jay Joker; or, A Hornet From Hackensack.
- 160—Diamond Dick, Jr.'s Special Duty; or, A Fight on the Fast Mail.
- 161—Diamond Dick, Jr.'s Pick Up; or, Raising the Ante at Hum Drum.
- 162—Diamond Dick, Jr., and Rowdy Kate; or, A Little Salt in the Seven Up.
- 163—Diamond Dick, Jr.'s Foxy Friend; or, Bluffed Out of a Big Roll.
- 164—Diamond Dick, Jr., Coppers a Bet; or, The Jay Boy from the East.
- 165—Diamond Dick, Jr., in the Black Hills; or, The Troubles of Trooper Toots.
- 166—Diamond Dick, Jr.'s Square Up; or, Ruling the Roost at Red-Eye.
- 167—Diamond Dick, Jr.'s Free-for-All; or, A Little Game of One-Call-Two.

For sale by newsdealers everywhere, or sent by mail, postpaid, on receipt of price, Five Cents, by the publishers,

STREET & SMITH, 238 William St., New York.

RALPH SMITH

19 SHERIDAN ST.

LAWRENCE, MASS.



SEND for latest list of boys & novels  
els that we sell for 3½c each, post  
paid, or exchange. 10 Samples 50c.

*Ralph Smith,* 8 Brook St., R. 44  
Lawrence, Mass.

## WHAT IS A NOVEL WORTH?

For years Novels and Magazines have been sold at prices ranging from 25 to 50 Cents. Improved machinery has decreased the cost of production, and the Ten Cent Magazine has become an established fact. Now first quality novels are offered to the public at

## TEN CENTS . . .

These Libraries are not composed of poor stories printed on cheap paper. They are not a collection of unsalable books offered at reduced prices because they cannot be sold otherwise. They do not contain a series of stories by unknown authors.

*The Eagle Library,*

*The Medal Library,*

*The Arrow Library,*

*The Columbia Library,*

*The Magnet Library,*

*The Historical Series,*

are offered at Ten Cents because that is the correct modern price for a first-class copyright novel. In these books the type is clear and legible, the paper of good quality, the stories by the best known popular authors, the covers of most attractive design and

## THE PRICE IS RIGHT . . .

Read one and you will want another.  
Do not be fooled by inferior books at a higher price.  
These libraries are published by

**STREET & SMITH, New York.**



Send for latest list of books for sale  
at that we sell for 31c each, or  
paid, or exchange. 10. Street & Smith, Inc.  
Brook St., N. Y.  
Lawrence, Mass.

The Old Reliable,

## NICK CARTER WEEKLY,

Is the warmest baby in the bunch when it comes to  
detective stories. \*\*\*\*

ALWAYS UP TO DATE, AND A LITTLE BEYOND.

If you want to read of the methods of Nick  
Carter, the greatest detective that ever lived, get the  
NICK CARTER WEEKLY.

5 CENTS A COPY.

For sale by all newsdealers everywhere or sent by  
mail, postpaid, on receipt of price by

STREET & SMITH, Publishers,  
NEW YORK.

~~STREET & SMITH  
15 N. BROAD ST.  
LAWRENCE, MASS.~~



SEND for latest list of boys' novels  
els that we sell for 3½c each, post  
paid, or exchange. 10 Samples 35c.

*Ralph Smith,* 3 Brook St., R. 44  
Lawrence, Mass.

## SOME OF YOUR FAVORITE HEROES.

FRANK MERRIWELL.

DIAMOND DICK, JR.

CLIF FARADAY.

CADET CAREY.

NICK CARTER.

GENTLEMAN JOE.

## DID YOU EVER HEAR OF ANY OF THE ABOVE?

Do you know that every story ever written about any of the  
above favorites is copyrighted by and the exclusive property of  
STREET & SMITH, the publishers?

YOU CANNOT GET THESE STORIES UNLESS YOU GET  
STREET & SMITH'S EDITIONS.

That's why the boys like us so well—we are giving them  
the reading they want. If your newsdealer does not  
handle all of our lines, and refuses to do so, you can send  
the price to us, and get the books desired by return mail,

**STREET & SMITH, PUBLISHERS,  
NEW YORK.**

~~RALPH SMITH  
19 SHERIDAN ST.  
LAWRENCE, MASS.~~



# Good Reading ∴ Popular Stories

Special attention is called to Street & Smith's **QUARTERLY**  
**ISSUES** of various publications.

Each one of these Quarterlies consist of thirteen issues of the popular weeklies of the same name, including the thirteen colored illustrations and thirteen complete stories. The popularity of these publications has caused a great demand for back numbers, and the Quarterly form presents the best method of supplying this call, as the stories are in consecutive order and bound in convenient form for preservation, and sell at less price than the separate numbers would cost.

**Retail Price, 50 Cents, By Mail, Post-paid.**

## **NOW READY:**

- Tip Top Quarterly, No. 1, embracing Nos. 1 to 13 of the Tip Top Weekly.  
Tip Top Quarterly, No. 2, embracing Nos. 14 to 26 of the Tip Top Weekly.  
Tip Top Quarterly, No. 3, embracing Nos. 27 to 39 of the Tip Top Weekly.  
Tip Top Quarterly, No. 4, embracing Nos. 40 to 52 of the Tip Top Weekly.  
Tip Top Quarterly, No. 5, embracing Nos. 53 to 65 of the Tip Top Weekly.  
Tip Top Quarterly, No. 6, embracing Nos. 66 to 78 of the Tip Top Weekly.  
Tip Top Quarterly, No. 7, embracing Nos. 79 to 91 of the Tip Top Weekly.  
Tip Top Quarterly, No. 8, embracing Nos. 92 to 104 of the Tip Top Weekly.  
Tip Top Quarterly, No. 9, embracing Nos. 105 to 117 of the Tip Top Weekly.  
Red, White and Blue Quarterly, No. 1, embracing Nos. 1 to 13.  
Red, White and Blue Quarterly, No. 2, embracing Nos. 14 to 26.  
Red, White and Blue Quarterly, No. 3, embracing Nos. 27 to 39.  
Red, White and Blue Quarterly, No. 4, embracing Nos. 40 to 52.  
Nick Carter Quarterly No. 1, embracing Nos. 1 to 13 of the N. C. Weekly.  
Nick Carter Quarterly, No. 2, embracing Nos. 14 to 26 of the N. C. Weekly.  
Nick Carter Quarterly No. 3, embracing Nos. 27 to 39 of the N. C. Weekly.  
Nick Carter Quarterly, No. 4, embracing Nos. 53 to 65 of the N. C. Weekly.  
Nick Carter Quarterly, No. 5, embracing Nos. 66 to 78 of the N. C. Weekly.  
Nick Carter Quarterly, No. 6, embracing Nos. 79 to 91 of the N. C. Weekly.  
Nick Carter Quarterly, No. 7, embracing Nos. 92 to 104 of the N. C. Weekly.  
Diamond Dick, Jr. Quarterly, No. 1, embracing Nos. 1 to 13, Diamond Dick, Jr.  
Diamond Dick, Jr. Quarterly, No. 2, embracing Nos. 14 to 26, Diamond Dick, Jr.  
Diamond Dick, Jr. Quarterly, No. 3, embracing Nos. 27 to 39, Diamond Dick, Jr.  
Diamond Dick, Jr. Quarterly, No. 4, embracing Nos. 40 to 52, Diamond Dick, Jr.  
Diamond Dick, Jr. Quarterly, No. 5, embracing Nos. 53 to 65, Diamond Dick, Jr.

*Sold by all Newsdealers, or sent post-paid by mail on receipt of price by*

**STREET & SMITH, PUBLISHERS, 238 William Street, New York.**

RALPH SMITH  
18 SHERIDAN ST.  
LA WRENCE, MASS.

RALPH SMITH  
3 BROOK STREET; ROUTE 44  
LA WRENCE, MASS.

MAGAZINES AND NOVELS



~~RALPH SMITH  
18 SHERRIDAN ST.  
LAVERGNE, MASS.~~



# Ten Cents

## STREET & SMITH

*Make the Right Books  
at the Right Price*

Is the  
Right  
Price  
for a  
Good  
Novel



64  
128  
THIS BOOK  
IS A FAIR  
SAMPLE OF  
THE ENTIRE  
LINE

For Sale by  
Newsdealers  
Everywhere

The ARROW LIBRARY contains  
the best work of the most  
writers.

The EAGLE LIBRARY contains  
the best and most popular American  
copyright novels.

The MAGNET LIBRARY is the only  
line of first-class detective tales.  
The exclusive list of the celebrated  
Nick Carter (American) stories, and  
the best work of foreign writers.

The COLUMBIA LIBRARY of stories  
of war and adventure.

The MEDAL LIBRARY has the best  
and most famous stories ever writ-  
ten for boys.

The ALLIANCE LIBRARY. A line  
of religious novels, each one  
containing sound Christian teaching  
and entirely undenominational.

The HISTORICAL SERIES. A  
and specially written series of  
stories that "read like novels."

ALL THE ABOVE ARE  
TEN-CENT BOOKS

OLD TIP TOPS  
SEND SUPPLY LIST  
PER LOT  
RALPH P.

OLD TIP TO  
SEND SUPPLY  
PER  
RALPH P.